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THE WORKS

OF

PROFESSOR WILSON

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

EDITED BY HIS SON-IN-LAW

PROFESSOR FERRIER

VOL. III.

NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLVI

NOCTES

AMBROSIANÆ

BY

PROFESSOR WILSON

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. III.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLVI

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ΗΔΕΑ ΚΩΤΙΛΛΟΝΤΑ ΚΑΘΗΜΕΝΟΝ ΟΙΝΟΠΟΤΑΖΕΙΝ.

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NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ.

XXV.

(JUNE 1830.)

ΧΡΗ Δ'ΕΝ ΣΥΜΠΟΣΙΩ ΚΥΛΙΚΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΝΙΣΣΟΜΕΝΑΩΝ
ΗΔΕΑ ΚΩΤΙΛΛΟΝΤΑ ΚΑΘΗΜΕΝΟΝ ΟΙΝΟΠΟΤΑΖΕΙΝ.

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BUT GAILY TO CHAT WHILE DISCUSSING THEIR TIPPLE."
An excellent rule of the hearty old cock 'tis—
And a very fit motto to put to our Noctes.]

C. N. *ap. Ambr.*

Scene,—The Arbour, Buchanan Lodge. Time,—Eight o'clock. Present,—NORTH, ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER, SHEPHERD, *and* TICKLER. *Table with light wines, oranges, biscuits, almonds, and raisins.*

Shepherd. Rain but no star-proof, this bonny bee-hummin, bird-nest-concealin Bower, that seems, — but for the trelliswark peepin out here and there where the later flowerin-shrubs are scarcely yet out o' the bud, — rather a production o' Nature's sel, than o' the gardener's genius. O, sir, but in its bricht and balmy beauty 'tis even nae less than a perfeck Poem!

North. Look, James, how she cowers within her couch—only the point of her bill, the tip of her tail, visible—so pas-

sionately cleaveth the loving creature to the nestlings beneath her mottled breast, — each morning beautifying from down to plumage, till next Sabbath-sun shall stir them out of their cradle, and scatter them, in their first weak wavering flight, up and down the dewy dawn of their native Paradise.

Shepherd. A bit mavis![1] Hushed as a dream—and like a dream to be startled aff intil ether, if you but touch the leaf-croon that o'er-canopies her head. What an ee! Shy, yet confidin — as she sits there ready to flee awa wi' a rustle in a moment, yet linked within that rim by the chains o' love, motionless as if she were dead!

North. See—she stirs!

Shepherd. Dinna be disturbed. I could glower at her for hours, musin on the mystery o' instinct, and at times forgettin that my een were fixed but on a silly bird,—for sae united are a' the affections o' sentient Natur that you hae only to keek[2] intil a bush o' broom, or a sweet-briar, or doun to the green braird aneath your feet, to behold in the lintie, or the lark—or in that mavis—God bless her!—an emblem o' the young Christian mother fauldin up in her nursin bosom the beauty and the blessedness o' her ain First-born!

North. I am now threescore-and-ten, James, and I have suffered and enjoyed much; but I know not, if, during all the confusion of those many-coloured years, diviner delight ever possessed my heart and my imagination, than of old entranced me in solitude, when among the braes, and the moors, and the woods, I followed the verdant footsteps of the Spring, uncompanioned but by my own shadow, and gave names to every nook in nature, from the singing-birds of Scotland discovered, but disturbed not, in their most secret nests.

Tickler. Namby-pamby!

Shepherd. Nae sic thing. A shilfa's[3] nest within the angle made by the slicht, silvery, satiny stem o' a bit birk-tree, and ane o' its young branches glitterin and glimmerin at ance wi' shade and sunshine and a dowery o' pearls, is a sicht that, when seen for the first time in this life, gars a boy's being loup out o' his verra bosom richt up intil the boundless blue o' heaven!

Tickler. Poo!

Shepherd. Whisht—O whisht. For 'tis felt to be something

[1] *Mavis*—thrush. [2] *Keek*—peep. [3] *Shilfa*—chaffinch.

far far beyond the beauty o' the maist artfu' contrivances o' mortal man,—and gin he be a thochtfu' callant, which frae wanderin and daunderin by himsel, far awa frae houses, and ayont the loneliest shielin[1] amang the hills, is surely nae unreasonable hypothesis, but the likeliest thing in natur, thinkna ye that though his mood micht be indistinck even as ony sleepin dream, that nevertheless it maun be sensibly interfused, throughout and throughout, wi' the consciousness that that Nest, wi' sic exquisite delicacy intertwined o' some substance seemingly mair beautifu' than ony moss that ever grew upon this earth, into a finest fabric growin as it were out o' the verra bark o' the tree, and in the verra nook—the only nook where nae winds could touch it, let them blaw a' at ance frae a' the airts,—wadna, sirs, I say, that callant's heart beat wi' awe in its delicht, feelin that that wee, cosy, beautifu', and lovely cradle, chirp-chirpin wi' joyfu' life, was bigged there by the hand o' Him that hung the sun in our heaven, and studded with stars the boundless universe?

Tickler. James, forgive my folly——

Shepherd. That I do, Mr Tickler — and that I would do, if for every peck there was a firlot. Yet when a laddie, I was an awfu' herrier![2] Sic is the inconsistency, because o' the corruption, o' human natur. Ilka spring, I used to hae half-a-dozen strings o' eggs——

Tickler—

"Orient pearls at random strung."

Shepherd. Na—no at random—but a' accordin to an innate sense o' the beauty o' the interminglin and interfusin variegation o' manifold colour, which, when a' gathered thegither on a yard o' twine, and dependin frae the laigh roof o' our bit cottie, aneath the cheese-bauk, and aiblins atween a couple o' hangin hams, seemed to ma een sae fu' o' a strange, wild, woodland, wonderfu', and maist unwarldish loveliness, that the verra rainbow hersel lauchin on us laddies no to be feared at the thunner, looked nae mair celestial than thae egg-shells! Ae string especially will I remember to my dying day. It tapered awa frae the middle, made o' the eggs o' the blackbird—doun through a' possible varecities—lark, lintie, yellow-

[1] *Shielin*—a shelter for sheep or shepherd among the hills.

[2] *Herrier*—rifler of birds' nests.

yite, hedge-sparrow, shilfa, and goldfinch — ay, the verra goldfinch hersel, rare bird in the Forest — to the twa ends so dewdrap-like, wi' the wee bit blue pearlins o' the kitty-wren. Damm Wullie Laidlaw for stealin them ae Sabbath when we was a' at the kirk! Yet I'll try to forgie him for sake o' "Lucy's Flittin,"[1] and because, notwithstanding that cruel crime, he's turned out a gude husband, a gude faither, and a gude freen.

Tickler. We used, at school, James, to boil and eat them.

Shepherd. Gin ye did, then wouldna I, for ony consideration, in a future state be your sowl.

Tickler. Where's the difference?

Shepherd. What! atween you and me? Yours was a base fleshly hunger, or hatred, or hard-heartedness, or scathe and scorn o' the quakin griefs o' the bit bonny shriekin burdies around the tuft o' moss, a' that was left o' their herried nests; but mine was the sacred hunger and thirst o' divine silver and gold gleamin amang the diamonds drapt by mornin on the hedgeraws, and rashes, and the broom, and the whins—love o' the lovely—desire conquerin but no killin pity—and joy o' blessed possession that left at times a tear on my cheek for the bereavement o' the heart-broken warblers o' the woods. Yet brak I not mony o' their hearts, after a'; for if the nest had five eggs, I generally took but twa; though I confess that on gaun back again to brae, bank, bush, or tree, I was glad when the nest was deserted, the eggs cauld, and the birds awa to some ither place. After a' I was never cruel, sirs; that's no a sin o' mine,—and whenever, either then or since, I hae gien pain to ony leevin cretur, in nae lang time after, o' the twa pairties, mine has been the maist achin heart. As for pyats, and hoodie-craws, and the like, I used to herry them without compunction, and flingin up stanes, to shoot them wi' a gun, as they were flasterin out o' the nest.

English Opium-Eater. Some one of my ancestors—for, even with the deepest sense of my own unworthiness, I cannot believe that my own sins, as a cause, have been adequate to the production of such an effect—must have perpetrated some enormous—some monstrous crime, punished in me, his descendant, by utter blindness to all bird's nests.

[1] "Lucy's Flitting," by William Laidlaw, Sir Walter Scott's friend, is one of our simplest and most pathetic melodies.

Shepherd. Maist likely. The De Quinshys cam ower wi' the Conqueror, and were great criminals.—But did you ever look for them, sir?

English Opium-Eater. From the year 1811—the year in which the Marrs and Williamsons were murdered[1]—till the year 1821, in which Buonaparte the little—vulgarly called Napoleon the Great—died of a cancer in his stomach——

Shepherd. A hereditary disease—accordin to the Doctors.

English Opium-Eater. ——did I exclusively occupy myself during the spring months, from night till morning, in searching for the habitations of these interesting creatures.

Shepherd. Frae nicht till mornin! That comes o' reversin the order o' Natur. You micht see a rookery or a heronry by moonlicht—but no a wren's nest aneath the portal o' some cave lookin out upon a sleepless waterfa' dinnin to the stars. Mr De Quinshy, you and me leeves in twa different warlds—and yet it's wonnerfu' hoo we understaun' ane anither sae weel's we do—quite a phenomena. When I'm soopin you're breakfastin—when I'm lyin doun, after your coffee you're risin up—as I'm coverin my head wi' the blankets you're pittin on your breeks—as my een are steekin like sunflowers aneath the moon, yours are glowin like twa gas-lamps—and while your mind is masterin polectical economy and metapheesics, in a desperate fecht wi' Ricawrdo and Kant,[2] I'm heard by the nicht-wanderin fairies snorin trumpet-nosed through the land o' Nod.

English Opium-Eater. Though the revolutions of the heavenly bodies have, I admit, a certain natural connection with the ongoings of——

Shepherd. Wait awee—nane o' your astrology till after sooper. It canna be true, sir, what folk say about the influence o' the moon on character. I never thocht ye the least mad. Indeed, the only faut I hae to fin' wi' you is, that you're ower wise. Yet we speak what, in the lang-run, would

[1] In the second volume of his *Miscellanies* (1854), Mr De Quincey has described these murders with a power and circumstantiality which excite the most absorbing interest in the mind of the reader.

[2] David Ricardo, an eminent member of the London Stock-Exchange, and the profoundest writer on political economy which this country has produced, died in 1823. Immanuel Kant was the great philosopher of Königsberg, his native town, from which he was never farther distant than twenty miles during the whole course of a life, which lasted from 1724 to 1804.

appear to be ae common langage—I sometimes understaun' you no that verra indistinctly—and when we tackle in our talk to the great interests o' humanity, we're philosophers o' the same school, sir, and see the inner warld by the self-same central licht. We're incomprehensible creturs, are we men—that's beyond a dout;—and let us be born and bred as we may—black, white, red, or a deep bricht, burnished copper—in spite o' the division o' tongues, there's nae division o' hearts, for it's the same bluid that gangs circulatin through our mortal tenements, carrying alang on its tide the same freightage o' feelins and thochts, emotions, affections, and passions—though, like the ships o' different nations, they a' hoist their ain colours, and prood prood are they o' their leopards, or their crescent-moons, or their stars, or their stripes o' buntin;—but see! when it blaws great guns, hoo they a' fling owerboard their storm-anchors, and when their cables pairt, hoo they a' seek the shelterin lee o' the same michty breakwater, a belief in the being and attributes of the One Living God.—But was ye never out in the daytime, sir?

English Opium-Eater. Frequently.

Shepherd. But then it's sae lang sin' syne, that in memory the sunlicht maun seem amaist like the moonlicht,—sic, indeed, even wi' us that rise with the laverock, and lie doun wi' the lintie, is the saftenin—the shadin—the darkenin power o' the Past, o' Time the Prime Minister o' Life, wha, in spite o' a' Opposition, carries a' his measures by a silent vote, and aften, wi' a weary wecht o' taxes, bows a' the wide warld doun to the verra dust.

English Opium-Eater. In the South my familiars have been the nightingales, in the North the owls. Both are merry birds—the one singing, and the other shouting, in moods of midnight mirth.—Nor in my deepest, darkest fits of meditation or of melancholy, did the one or the other ever want my sympathies,—whether piping at the root of the hedgerow, or hooting from the trunk of the sycamore—else all still both on earth and in heaven.

Shepherd. Ye maun hae seen mony a beautifu' and mony a sublime sicht, sir, in the Region, lost to folk like us, wha try to keep oursels awauk a' day, and asleep a' nicht—and your sowl, sir, maun hae acquired something o' the serene and solemn character o' the sunleft skies. And true it is, Mr De

Quinshy, that ye hae the voice o' a nicht-wanderin man—laigh and lown—pitched on the key o' a wimplin burn speakin to itsel in the silence, aneath the moon and stars.

Tickler.—'Tis pleasant, James, to hear all us four talking at one time—your bass, my counter, Mr De Quincey's tenor, and North's treble——

North. Treble, indeed!

Tickler. Ay, childish treble——

Shepherd. Come, nae quarrellin yet. That's a quotation frae Shakespeare, and there's nae insult in a mere quotation. I never could admire Wullie's *Seven Ages.* They're puir, and professional.

English Opium-Eater. Professional, but not poor, Mr Hogg. Shakespeare intended not in those pictures to show the most secret spirit of the Seasons of Life. In one sense they are superficial,—but the sympathies touched thereby may be most profound—for the familiar, when given by a master's hand, awakens the unfamiliar—yea, the grotesque gives birth to the grand—the simple to the sublime—and plain and easy as are the steps of that stair, made of earth's common stone, and without balustrades of cunning or gorgeous carving—yet do they finally conduct us, as we ascend, to the portico, and then into the penetralia, of a solemn temple—even the temple of life. For is not that an oracular line,

" Sans eyes, sans nose, sans teeth, sans everything."

Shepherd. Faith, I believe it is. I was gaun to gie ye prose picturs o' the *Seven Ages* o' my ain pentin[1]—but I'll keep them for anither Noctes. And noo, sir, wull ye be sae gude as help yoursel to a glass o' calcavalla—or is't caracalla?—and then launch awa, as Allan Cunningham says, wi' " a wet sheet and a flowing sail," into the sea of metapheesics.

English Opium-Eater. It is incumbent on every human soul, Mr Hogg, to bear within itself a Fountain of Will. This, Fichte called its *I*—the *Ego* of each individual. This should be active and full of all power, endless in the production of desires—only coerced and ruled by knowledge and apprehensions of right and wrong, and sundry tendernesses.

Shepherd. I hear a response to that, sir, in my ain sowl—but no that very distinck.

[1] *Pentin*—painting.

English Opium-Eater. To the forming mind, which is yet uninstructed and blind, the discovery by sympathy of their judgments over it, is useful to instruct, to give it knowledge of itself, of them, and of the constitution of things.

Shepherd. Didna Adam Smith say something like that, sir?[1]

North. Yes, James, but not precisely so.

English Opium Eater. But when the mind is formed, then it ought to use that sympathy only as a means of tenderness—I mean that sympathy which discovers to it the operation of other minds. That sympathy ought to be in subjection to its self-moving principles and powers. Yes, Mr Hogg, Adam Smith is right in thinking that a great part of actual morality is from this operation of sympathy. There are numbers of people to whom it is almost a recognised and stated law or truth, that the approbation and condemnation of society is the reason for doing and not doing. But hear me, sir. The tendency of the Christian Religion is to produce the *I*—the *Ego*—and draw out of itself—that is, the Individuality—all the rules of action. Therefore, it is the perfect Law of Liberty. In other words,—at the same time that it is perfect liberty, it is perfect law. The Jewish law is wholly external—that is, not that it ends and is completed in things external, but its power is from without, and from without it binds. The other binds from within. Indeed, it does not so much bind as reign.

Shepherd. A fine and good distinction.

English Opium-Eater. Now, all people who are bound from without, are Jews of this earth. They are held, regulated, constricted, and constructed,—edified, that is, built up, of a quantity of intercatenated ideas given to them, which they had no part in making, in and by which they desire and trust to live. But life is not there, except that life is everywhere. The number of them was great among old-fashioned people, who lived, moved, breathed, and had their being among a set of hereditary rules, many of them good, many indifferent, and many ridiculous—but, on the whole, destroying the Individuality, the *I*—and lying like a perpetual, although unfelt weight on the will.

Shepherd. Strickly speakin, no free augents.

[1] In his admirable work entitled *The Theory of Moral Sentiments.* Adam Smith, born at Kirkcaldy in 1723, died in Edinburgh in 1790.

English Opium-Eater. Now, my dear James, Poetry is of the earth, a spirit analogous to Christianity. It is free, yet under full law, producing out of itself both action and guidance, both "law and impulse." Poetry is in willing harmony with the world—a vast law voluntarily embraced, and always anew embraced, hence, evermore and to the last, spontaneous. The essence of Christianity, again, is, that the human being becomes without a will, and yet has the strongest will. It is self in the utmost degree triumphant, by means of the utter annihilation of self. For the Christian seeks absolute conformity of his will to the will of God, whatever that may be, and however promulgated. He desires, and is capable of, no other happiness. It would be misery to him to imagine himself divided from that will. The conforming to that will is, then, in the utmost degree, inmost utter spontaneity, perfect liberty, and yet absolute law. But in this state, his own will, which, towards God, is nothing but the resignation of all will, is towards all human beings utter and irresistible. He can speak and act; he can do whatever is to be done; he can rule the spirits of men; he can go conquering nations in the power of the Word, and the sword of the Spirit. Therefore, so he is at once self-triumphant and self-annihilated. He is self-annihilated, for he has given himself up; he feels himself not —is nothing—mere conformity—passiveness—manifestations of an agency. He feels only the presence, the spirit, the power in which he lives. He lives in God. At the same time he is self-triumphant. For what is self, but the innermost and very nature of the being, the "*intima et ipsissima essentia?*" All that is subsequent and accidental is not self; but this Christian Love, as it advances, throws off, expels more and more, everything that is subsequent and accidental, bringing out into activity, consciousness, and power, that nature which was given with being to the soul. Moreover, this state of surrendered, happy Love, searches that nature with pleasures nothing short of ecstasy. So that the ultimate extinction of self becomes its unspeakable happiness; and self, annihilated, exalted in glory, and bathed in bliss, is self-triumphant, and Death is Immortality.

Shepherd. O man! if them that's kickin up sic a row the noo about the doctrine o' the Christian religion, had looked intil the depths o' their ain natur wi' your een, they had a'

been as mum as mice keekin roun' the end o' a pew, in place o' scrauchin like pyats on the leads, or a hoodie wi' a sair throat.

English Opium-Eater. I know not to what you allude, Mr Hogg, for I live out of what is called the Religious World.

Shepherd. A loud, noisy, vulgar, bawlin, brawlin, wranglin, branglin, routin, and roarin warld—maist unfittin indeed for the likes o' you, sir, wha, under the shadows o' woods and mountains, at midnight, communes wi' your ain heart, and is still.

English Opium-Eater. No religious controversy in modern days, sir, ever seemed to me to reach back into those recesses in my spirit where the sources lie from which well out the bitter or the sweet waters—the sins and the miseries—the holinesses and the happinesses, of our incomprehensible being!

Shepherd. And if they ever do, hoo drumly the stream!

English Opium-Eater. Better even a mere sentimental religion, which, though shallow, is pure, than those audacious doctrines broached by Pride-in-Humility, who, blind as the bat, essays the flight of the eagle, and ignorant o' the lowest natures, yet claims acquaintance with the decrees of the Most High.

Shepherd. Ay — better far a sentimental—a poetical religion, as you say, sir—though that's far frae being the true thing either—for o' a' the Three Blessings o' Man, the last is the best—Love, Poetry, and Religion. What'n a book micht be written, I've aften thocht—and aiblins may hae said—on thae three words!

English Opium-Eater. Yes, my dear James—Beauty, the soul of Poetry, is indeed divine—but there is that which is diviner still—and that is DUTY.

> "Flowers laugh before her on their beds,
> And fragrance in her footing treads;
> She doth preserve the stars from wrong,
> And the eternal heavens through her are fresh and strong."

Shepherd. Wha said that?

English Opium-Eater. Who?—Wordsworth. And the *Edinburgh Review—laughed.*

Shepherd. He has made it, sin' syne, lauch out o' the wrang side o' its mouth. He soars.

North. Human life is always, in its highest moral exhibitions, sublime rather than beautiful—and the sublimity is not that of the imagination, but of the soul.

Shepherd. That's very fine, sir; I wish you would say it ower again—do.

North. The setting or the rising sun, being mere matter, are in themselves, James, nothing, unless they are clothed in light by the imagination, unless the east and the west are irradiated by poetry. But the spirit that is within us is an existence, in itself vast and imperishable, and we see and know its nature—its essence then best, when we regard it with the steadiest, most solemn, and unimpassioned gaze—not veiling it in earthly imagery, and adorning it with the garments of sense, and then worshipping its imagined grandeur and beauty with such emotions as we creatures of the clay, children of the dust, have been wont to cherish towards transitory shadows—the fleeting phantoms of our own raising—but stripping it rather bare of all vain and idle, however bright and endearing colours, poured over it by the yearnings, and longings, and passions of an earthly love—and trying to behold it in its true form and lineaments, not afraid that even when it stands forth in its own proper lights and proportions, Virtue will ever seem less than angelical and divine—although her countenance may be somewhat sad, her eyes alternately raised to heaven in hope, and cast down in fear to the earth—her voice, it may be, tremulous—or mute, as she stands before her Creator, her Saviour, and her Judge,—her beauty visible, perhaps, to the intelligences, to the bright Ardours round the throne—but all unknown to herself, for she is humble, awe-struck, and sore afraid. And so, too, were all the countless multitudes of human beings, who have in this life—so evanescent—put their trust, perhaps, too much in her—although her name was Virtue,—for still she was but human—and there is a strong taint—a dire corruption in all most bright and beautiful—that was once but an apparition of this earth.

Shepherd. Mr De Quinshy, dinna ye admire that?

English Opium-Eater. I do.

North. It will, I believe, be found, that in the highest moral

judgment of the characters of men, the feeling or emotion of beauty will not exist at all—but that it will have melted away and disappeared in a state of mind more suitable to the solemn, the sacred subject. A human being has done his duty, and gone to his reward. "God grant, in His infinite mercy, that I may do mine, and escape from darkness into eternal light!" That is, or ought to be—the first feeling, or thought of self—so suddenly interfused with the moral judgment on our dead brother, that it is as one and the same feeling and thought—too awful—too dreadful to be beautiful,—for the soul is with gloom overshadowed—and the only light that breaks through it is light straight from Heaven,—light ineffable, and that must not be profaned by an earthly name, whose very meaning evanishes with the earth, and is merged into another state of being—when we can only say,

"Come then, expressive Silence, muse his praise."

English Opium-Eater. And so, sir, in like manner, many descriptions may be given, and ought to be given, of suffering virtue, in which the sense or feeling of beauty is strong—for the love of virtue is thus excited and encouraged by delight. But carry on the representation of the trials of virtue to the last extremity—defeated or triumphant, failing or victorious—and then the moral mind—the conscience—will not be satisfied with the beautiful—nay, will be impatient of it—will turn from it austerely away—and will be satisfied and elevated by the calm, clear perception, that the poor, frail, erring, and sinful creature, lying, perhaps, on its forsaken bed of straw, has striven, with all its heart and all its soul, to do the will of its heavenly Father—and dares to hope that, by the atonement, it may see the face of God. In such a scene as this, the spirit of the looker-on is gathered up into one Thought—and that is a Mystery—of its own origin and of its own destiny—and all other thoughts would be felt repugnant to that awe-struck mood, nor would they coalesce with feelings breathed on it from the promised land lying in light unvisited beyond death and the grave.

North. You pause—and, therefore, I say that such states of mind as these cannot be of long endurance. For they belong only to the most awful hours and events of this life. They pass away, either entirely, to rise up again with renovated

force, on occasions that demand them, or they blend with inferior states, solemnising and sanctifying them; and then to such states the term beautiful may, I think, be correctly and well applied. For the mere human natural affections of love, and delight, and pity, and admiration,—these all blend with our moral judgments and emotions—and the picture of the entire state of mind, if naturally and truly drawn, may be, nay, ought to be, bright with the lights of poetry. To such pictures we apply the term Beautiful;—they find their place among the moral literature of a people, and when studied, under the sanction and guidance of thoughts higher still, they cannot fail to be friendly to virtue.

English Opium-Eater. May I speak, sir?—That the highest moral judgment, however, is something in itself, apart from all such emotions, excellent and useful as they are, and how amiable and endearing I need not say, is proved by this—that there are many men of such virtue as awes us, and seems to us beyond and above our reach, who have nevertheless seemed to have never felt at all, or but very faintly, the emotion of the beauty of virtue. The Word of God they knew must be obeyed—to obey it they set themselves with all their collected might: To avert the wrath—to gain the love of God, was all their aim, day and night—and that was to be done but by bringing their will into accordance with, and subjection to, the will of God. The struggle was against sin—and for righteousness—shall a soul be saved or lost? And no other emotion could be permitted to blend with thoughts due to God alone, from his creature striving to obey his laws, and hearing ever and anon a "still small voice" whispering in his ear that the reward of obedience, the punishment of disobedience, must be beyond all comprehension,—and, necessarily (the soul itself being immortal), enduring through all eternity.

Shepherd. If you will alloo a simple shepherd to speak on sic a theme——

North. Yes, my dearest James, you can, if you choose, speak on it better than either of us.

Shepherd. Weel, then, that is the view o' virtue that seems maist consistent wi' the revelation o' its true nature by Christianity. Isna there, sirs, a perpetual struggle—a ceevil war—in ilka man's heart? This we ken, whenever we have an

opportunity o' discerning what is gaun on in the hearts o' ithers,—this we ken, whenever we set ourselves to tak a steady gaze intil the secrets o' our ain. We are, then, moved—ay, appalled, by much that we behold; and wherever there is sin, there, be assured, will be sorrow. But arena we aften cheered, and consoled, too, by much that we behold? And wherever there is goodness, our ain heart, as weel's them o' the spectators, burns within us! Ay—it burns within us. We feel—we see, that we or our brethren are pairtly as God would wish—as we must be afore we can hope to see his face in mercy. I've often thocht intil mysel that that feeling is ane that we may *desecrate* (is that the richt word?) by ranking it amang them that appertains to our senses and our imagination, rather than to the religious soul.

North. Mr De Quincey?

English Opium-Eater. Listen. An extraordinary man, indeed, sir!

Shepherd. No me; there's naething extraordinar about me, mair than about a thousand ither Scottish shepherds. But ca' not, I say, the face o' that father beautifu' who stands beside the bier o' his only son, and wi' his ain withered hands helps to let doun the body into the grave—though all its lines, deep as they are, are peacefu' and untroubled, and the grey uncovered head maist reverend and affecting in the sunshine that falls at the same time on the coffin of him who was last week the sole stay o' his auld age! But if you could venture in thocht to be wi' that auld man when he is on his knees before God, in his lanely room, blessing him for a' his mercies, even for having taken awa the licht o' his eyes, extinguished it in a moment, and left a' the house in darkness—you would not then, if you saw into his inner spirit, venture to ca' the calm that slept there—beautifu'! Na, na, na! In it you would feel assurance o' the immortality of the Soul—o' the transitoriness o' mere human sorrows—o' the vanity o' a' passion that clings to the clay—o' the power which the spirit possesses in richt o' its origin to see God's eternal justice in the midst o' sic utter bereavement as might well shake its faith in the Invisible—o' a' life where there is nae decaying frame to weep over and to bewail; and sae thinkin—and sae feelin—ye would behold in that auld man kneelin in your unkent presence, an eemage o' human nature by its intensest sufferings raised and reconciled to that feenal

state o' obedience, acquiescence, and resignation to the will o' the Supreme, which is virtue, morality, piety, in ae word —RELIGION. Ay, the feenal consummation o' mortality putting on immortality, o' the soul shedding the slough o' its earthly affections, and reappearing amaist in its pristine innocence, nae unfit inhabitant o' Heaven.

English Opium-Eater. Say not that a thousand Scottish shepherds could so speak, my dear sir.

Shepherd. Ay, and far better, too. But hearken till me—When that state o' mind passed away frae us, and we became willing to find relief, as it were, frae thochts sae far aboon the level o' them that must be our daily thochts, then we micht, and then probably we would, begin to speak, sir, o' the beauty o' the auld man's resignation, and in poetry or painting, the picture might be pronounced beautifu', for then our souls would hae subsided, and the deeper, the mair solemn, and the mair awfu' o' our emotions would o' themselves hae retired to rest within the recesses o' the heart, alang wi' maist o' the maist mysterious o' our moral and religious convictions.—(*Dog barks.*) Heavens! I could hae thocht that was Bronte!

North. No bark like his, James, now belongs to the world of sound.

Shepherd. Purple black was he all over, except the star on his breast—as the raven's wing. Strength and sagacity emboldened his bounding beauty, and a fierceness lay deep down within the quiet lustre o' his een that tauld ye, even when he laid his head upon your knees, and smiled up to your face like a verra intellectual and moral cretur,—as he was,—that had he been angered, he could hae torn in pieces a lion.

North. Not a child of three years old and upwards, in the neighbourhood of the Lodge, that had not hung by his mane, and played with his fangs, and been affectionately worried by him on the flowery greensward.

Shepherd. Just like a stalwart father gambollin wi' his lauchin bairns!—And yet there was a heart that could bring itsel to pushion Bronte! When the atheist flung him the arsenic ba', the deevil was at his elbow.[1]

[1] Bronte was poisoned—at least so it is very confidently believed—by some of Dr Knox's students, in revenge for the exposure (in Noctes XIX.) of the principles on which their anatomical school was conducted.

North. And would that my fist were now at his jugular!

Shepherd. What a nieve[1] o' airn!—Unclinch't, sir, for its fearsome.

North. Had the murder been perpetrated by ten detected Gilmerton carters, I would have smashed them like crockery!

Shepherd. En masse or *seriawtim*, till the cart-ruts ran wi' their felon bluid, and a race o' slit noses gaed staggerin through the stour, and then like a heap o' bashed and birzed paddocks walloped intil the ditch.

North. 'Twas a murder worthy of Hare or Burke, or the bloodiest of their most cruel and cowardly abettors.

Shepherd. I agree wi' you, sir;—but dinna look sae white, and sae black, and sae red in the face, and then sae mottled, as if you had the measles; for see, sir, how the evening sunshine is sleeping on his grave!

North. No yew-tree, James, ever grew so fast before—Mrs Gentle herself planted it at his head. My own eyes were somewhat dim, but as for hers—God love them!—they streamed like April skies—and nowhere else in all the garden are the daisies so bright as on that small mound. That wreath, so curiously wrought into the very form of flowery letters, seems to fantasy like a funeral inscription—his very name—Bronte.

Shepherd. Murder's murder, whether the thing pushioned hae four legs or only twa—for the crime is curdled into crime in the blackness o' the sinner's heart, and the revengefu' shedder even of bestial blood would, were the same demon to mutter into his ears, and shut his eyes to the gallows, poison the well in which the cottage-girl dips the pitcher that breaks the reflection o' her bonny face in that liquid heaven.—But hark! wi' that knock on the table you hae frichtened the mavis! Aften do I wonder whether or no birds, and beasts, and insecks, hae immortal sowls!

English Opium-Eater. What God makes, why should he annihilate? Quench our own Pride in the awful consciousness of our Fall, and will any other response come from that oracle within us—Conscience—than that we have no claim on God for immortality, more than the beasts which want indeed "discourse of reason," but which live in love, and by love, and breathe forth the manifestations of their being through

[1] *Nieve*—fist.

the same corruptible clay which makes the whole earth one mysterious burial-place, unfathomable to the deepest soundings of our souls!

Shepherd. True, Mr De Quinshy—true, true. Pride's at the bottom o' a' our blindness, and a' our wickedness, and a' our madness; for if we did indeed and of verity, a' the nichts and a' the days o' our life, sleepin and waukin, in delicht or in despair, aye remember, and never for a single moment forget, that we are a'—WORMS—Milton, and Spenser, and Newton—gods as they were on earth—and that they were gods, did not the flowers and the stars declare, and a' the twa blended warlds o' Poetry and Science, lyin as it were like the skies o' heaven reflected in the waters o' the earth, in anc anither's arms? Ay, Shakespeare himsel a WORM—and Imogen, and Desdemona, and Ophelia, a' but the eemages o' WORMS—and Macbeth, and Lear, and Hamlet! Where would be then our pride and the self-idolatry o' our pride, and all the vain-glorifications o' our imagined magnificence? Dashed doun into the worm-holes o' our birth-place, among all crawlin and slimy things—and afraid in our lurking-places to face the divine purity o' the far far-aff and eternal heavens in their infinitude!—Puir Bronte's dead and buried—and sae in a few years will a' Us Fowre be! Had we naething but our boasted reason to trust in, the dusk would become the dark—and the dark the mirk, mirk, mirk;—but we have the Bible,—and lo! a golden lamp illumining the short midnicht that blackens between the mortal twilight and the immortal dawn.

North (*blowing a boatswain's whistle*). Gentlemen—look here!

(*A noble young Newfoundlander comes bounding into the Arbour*).

Shepherd. Mercy me! mercy me! The verra dowg himsel! The dowg wi' the star-like breast!

North. Allow me, my friend, to introduce you to O'BRONTE.

Shepherd. Ay—I'll shake paws wi' you, my gran' fallow; and though it's as true among dowgs as men, that he's a clever chiel that kens his ain father, yet as sure as wee Jamie's mine ain, are you auld Bronte's son. You've gotten the verra same identical shake o' the paw—the verra same identical wag o' the tail. (See, as Burns says, hoo it "hangs ower his

hurdies wi' a swurl.") Your chowks the same—like him, too, as Shakespeare says, "dew-lapped like Thessawlian bills." The same braid, smooth, triangular lugs, hanging doun aneath your chafts; and the same still, serene, smilin, and sagacious een. Bark! man—bark! let us hear you bark—Ay, that's the verra key that Bronte barked on whenever "his blood was up and heart beat high:" and I'se warrant that in anither year or less, in a street-row, like your sire you'll clear the causeway o' a clud o' curs, and carry the terror o' your name frae the Auld to the New Flesh-market; though, tak my advice, ma dear O'Bronte, and, except when circumstances imperiously demand war, be thou—thou jewel of a Jowler—a lover of peace!

English Opium-Eater. I am desirous, Mr Hogg, of cultivating the acquaintance—nay, I hope of forming the friendship—of that noble animal. Will you permit him to——

Shepherd. Gang your wa's,[1] O'Bronte, and speak till the English Opium-Eater. Ma faith! You hae nae need o' drogs to raise your animal speerits, or heighen your imagination. What'n intensity o' life!—But whare's he been sin' he was puppied, Mr North?

North. On board a whaler. No education like a trip to Davis Strait.

Shepherd. He'll hae speeled, I'se warrant him, mony an iceberg—and worried mony a seal—aiblins a walrus, or sea-lion. But are ye no feared o' his rinnin awa to sea?

North. The spirit of his sire, James, has entered into him, and he would lie, till he was a skeleton, upon my grave.

Shepherd. It canna be denied, sir, that you hae an unaccountable power o' attaching to you, no only dowgs, but men, women, and children. I've never douted but that you maun hae some magical pouther, that you blaw in amang their hair—na, intil their verra lugs and een—imperceptible fine as the motes i' the sun—and then there's nae resistance, but the sternest Whig saftens afore you, the roots o' the Radical relax, and a' distinctions o' age, sex, and pairty—the last the stubbornest and dourest o' a'—fade awa intil undistinguishable confusion—and them that's no in the secret o' your glamoury, fears that the end o' the warld's at haun, and that there 'ill sune be nae mair use for goods and chattels in the Millennium.

Tickler. As I am a Christian——

[1] *Gang your wa's*—get off.

Shepherd. You a Christian!

Tickler. ——Mr De Quincey has given O'Bronte a box of opium.

Shepherd. What? Has the dowg swallowed the spale-box o' pills? We maun gar him throw it up.

North. Just like that subscriber, who alone, out of the present population of the globe, has thrown up—THE MAGAZINE.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw!—capital wut! Sin' he couldna digeest it, he has reason to be thankfu' that the Dooble Nummer didna stick in his weasen, and mak him a corp. What would hae become o' him, had they exploded like twa bomb-shells?

English Opium-Eater. The most monstrous and ignominious ignorance reigns among all the physicians of Europe, respecting the powers and properties of the poppy.

Shepherd. I wush in this case, sir, that the poppy mayna pruve ower poorfu' for the puppy, and that the dowg's no a dead man. Wull ye take your bible-oath that he bolted the box?

English Opium-Eater. Mr Hogg, I never could see any sufficient reason why, in a civilised and Christian country, an oath should be administered even to a witness in a court of justice. Without any formula, Truth is felt to be sacred—nor will any words weigh——

Shepherd. You're for upsettin the haill frame o' ceevil society, sir, and bringin back on this kintra a' the horrors o' the French Revolution. The power o' an oath lies, no in the Reason, but in the Imagination. Reason tells that simple affirmation or denial should be aneuch atween man and man. But Reason canna bind, or, if she do, Passion snaps the chain. For ilka passion, sir, even a passion for a bead or a button, is as strong as Samson burstin the withies. But Imagination can bind, for she ca's on her Flamin Ministers—The Fears;—they palsy-strike the arm that would disobey the pledged lips—and thus oaths are dreadfu' as Erebus and the gates o' hell.—But see what ye hae dune, sir,—only look at O'Bronte.

[O'BRONTE *sallies from the Arbour—goes driving head-over-heels through among the flower-beds, tearing up pinks and carnations with his mouth and paws, and, finally, makes repeated attempts to climb up a tree.*

English Opium-Eater. No such case is recorded in the medical books—and very important conclusions may be drawn from na accurate observation of the phenomena now exhibited by a

distinguished member of the canine species, under such a dose of opium as would probably send Mr Coleridge[1] himself to——

Shepherd. ——his lang hame—or Mr De Quinshy either—though I should be loth to lose sic a poet as the ane, and sic a philosopher as the ither—or sic a dowg as O'Bronte.—But look at him speelin up the apple-tree like the auld serpent! He's thinkin himsel, in the delusion o' the drog, a wull-cat or a bear, and has clean forgotten his origin. Deil tak me gin I ever saw the match o' that! He's gotten up; and's lyin a' his length on the branch, as if he were streekin himsel out to sleep on the ledge o' a brig! What thocht's gotten intil his head noo? He's for herryin the goldfinch's nest amang the verra tapmost blossoms!—Ay, my lad! that was a thud!

[O'Bronte, *who has fallen from the pippin, recovers his feet—storms the Arbour—upsets the table, with all the bottles, glasses, and plates, and then, dashing through the glass front-door of the Lodge, disappears with a crash into the interior.*

English Opium-Eater. Miraculous!

Shepherd. A hairy hurricane!—What think ye, sir, o' the Scottish Opium-Eater?

English Opium-Eater. I hope it is not hydrophobia.

Tickler. He manifestly imagines himself at the whaling, and is off with the harpooners.

Shepherd. A vision o' blubber's in his sowl. Oh! that he could gie the warld his Confessions!

English Opium-Eater. Mr Hogg, how am I to understand that insinuation, sir?

Shepherd. Ony way you like. But, did ever onybody see a philosopher sae passionate? Be cool—be cool.

Tickler. See, see, see!

[O'Bronte,

"Like a glory from afar,
Like a reappearing star,"

comes spanging back into the cool of the evening, with Cyprus, North's *unique male tortoise-shell cat in his mouth, followed by* John *and* Betty, *broom-and-spit-armed, with other domestics in the distance.*

[1] S. T. Coleridge was a great consumer of opium. See *his* "confessions" in Cottle's *Reminiscences.* Born in 1771, Coleridge died in 1834.

North. Drop Cyprus, you villain! Drop Cyprus, you villain! I say, you villain, drop Cyprus—or I will brain you with Crutch!

[O'Bronte *turns a deaf ear to all remonstrances, and continues his cat-carrying career through flower, fruit, and kitchen gardens — the crutch having sped after him in vain, and upset a bee-hive.*

Tickler. Demme—I'm off. [*Makes himself scarce.*

North. Was that thunder?

Shepherd. Bees—bees—bees! Intil the Arbour—intil the Arbour—Oh! that it had a door wi' a hinge, and a bolt in the inside! Hoo the swarm's ragin wud! The hummin heavens is ower het to haud them — and if ae leader chances to cast his ee hither, we are lost. For let but ane set the example, and in a moment there 'ill be a charge o' beggonets.[1]

English Opium-Eater. In the second book of his *Georgics*, Virgil, at once poet and naturalist — and indeed the two characters are, I believe, uniformly united—beautifully treats of the economy of bees—and I remember one passage———

Shepherd. They're after Tickler—they're after Tickler—like a cloud o' Cossacks or Polish Lancers—a' them that's no settlin on the crutch. And see — see a division — the left o' the army — is bearin doun on O'Bronte. He'll sune liberate Ceeprus.

Tickler (*sub tegmine fagi*). Murder—murder—murder!

Shepherd. Ay, you may roar — that's nae flea-bitin — nor midge-bitin neither—na, it's waur than wasps — for wasps' stings hae nae barbs, but bees' hae — and when they strike them in, they canna rug them out again withouten leavin ahint their entrails — sae they curl theirsels up upon the wound, be it on haun, neck, or face, and, demon-like, spend their vitality in the sting, till the venom gangs dirlin to your verra heart. But do ye ken I'm amaist sorry for Mr Tickler —for he'll be murdered outricht by the insecks—although he in a mainner deserved it for rinnin awa, and no sharin the common danger wi' the rest at the mouth of the Arbour. If he escapes wi' his life, we maun ca' a court-martial, and hae him broke for cooardice. Safe us! he's comin here, wi' the haill bike[2] about his head!—Let us rin — let us rin! Let us rin for our lives! [*The* Shepherd *is off and away.*

[1] *Beggonets*—bayonets.

[2] *Bike*—swarm.

North. What! and be broke for cowardice? Let us die at our post like men.

English Opium-Eater. I have heard Mr Wordsworth deliver an opinion, respecting the courage, or rather the cowardice, of poets, which at the time, I confess, seemed to me to be unwarranted by any of the accredited phenomena of the poetical character. It was to this effect: That every passion of the poet being of "imagination all compact," fear would in all probability, on sudden and unforeseen emergencies, gain an undue ascendancy in his being over all the other unaroused active powers :—(and here suffer me to put you on your guard against believing, that by the use of such terms as Active Powers, I mean to class myself, as a metaphysical moralist, in the Scottish school,—that is, the school more especially of Reid and Stewart[1]—whose ignorance of the Will—the sole province of Moral Philosophy—I hold to be equally shameful and conspicuous :)—so that, except in cases where that Fear was withstood by the force of Sympathy, the poet so assailed would, ten to one (such was the homely expression of the Bard anxious to *clench it*), take to almost immediate flight. This doctrine, as I have said, appeared to me, at that time, not to be founded on a sufficiently copious and comprehensive induction;—but I had very soon after its oral delivery by the illustrious author of the *Excursion*, an opportunity of subjecting it to the test act :—For, as Mr Wordsworth and myself were walking through a field of considerable — nay, great extent of acres—discussing the patriotism of the Spaniards, and more particularly the heroic defence of

> "Iberian burghers, when the sword they drew
> In Zaragoza, naked to the gales
> Of fiercely-breathing war,"—

a bull of a red colour (and that there must be something essentially and inherently vehement in red, or rather the natural idea of red, was interestingly proved by that answer of the blind man to an inquirer more distinguished probably for his curiosity than his acuteness—"that it was like the sound of a trumpet") bore down suddenly upon our discourse, breaking, as you may well suppose, the thread thereof, and dissipating, for

[1] Dr Thomas Reid, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, born in 1709, died in 1796. For Stewart, see *ante*, vol. ii. p. 238.

a while, the many high dreams (dreams indeed!) which we had been delighting to predict of the future fates and fortunes of the Peninsula. The Bard's words, immediately before the intrusion of Taurus, were, "that death was a bugbear," and that the universal Spanish nation would "work out their own salvation." One bellow—and we were both hatless on the other side of the ditch. "If they do," said I, "I hope it will not be after our fashion, with fear and trembling." But I rather suspect, Mr North, that I am this moment stung by one of those insects, behind the ear, and in among the roots of the hair, nor do I think that the creature has yet disengaged —or rather disentangled itself from the nape—for I feel it struggling about the not—I trust—immedicable wound—the bee being scarcely distinguishable, while I place my finger on the spot, from the swelling round the puncture made by its sting, which, judging from the pain, must have been surcharged with—nay, steeped in venom. The pain is indeed most acute — and approaches to anguish — I had almost said agony.

North. Bruise the bee "even on the wound himself has made." 'Tis the only specific.—Any alleviation of agony?

English Opium-Eater. A shade. The analysis of such pain as I am now suffering—or say rather, enduring——

[TICKLER *and the* SHEPHERD, *after having in vain sought shelter among the shrubs, come flying demented towards the Arbour.*

Tickler and Shepherd. Murder!—murder!—murder!

North—

"Arcades ambo,
Et cantare pares, et respondere parati!"

English Opium-Eater. Each encircled, as to his forehead, with a living crown—a murmuring bee-diadem worthy of Aristæus.

North. Gentlemen, if you mingle yourselves with us, I will shoot you both dead upon the spot with this fowling-piece.

Shepherd. Whatna foolin-piece? Oh! sir, but you're cruel!

[TICKLER *lies down, and rolls himself on a plat.*

North. Destruction to a bed of onion-seed! James! into the tool-house.

Shepherd. I hae tried it thrice—but John and Betty hae

barred themselves in against the swarm—Oh! dear me—I'm exhowsted—sae let me lie down and dee beside Mr Tickler! [*The* Shepherd *lies down beside* Mr Tickler.

English Opium-Eater. If any proof were wanting that I am more near-sighted than ever, it would be that I do not see in all the air, or round the luminous temples of Messrs Tickler and Hogg, one single bee in motion or at rest.

North. They have all deserted their stations, and made a simultaneous attack on O'Bronte. Now, Cyprus, run for your life!

Shepherd (*raising his head*). Hoo he's devoorin them by hunders!—Look, Tickler.

Tickler. My eyes, James, are bunged up—and I am flesh-blind.

Shepherd. Noo they're yokin to Ceeprus! His tail's as thick wi' pain and rage as my arm. Hear till him caterwaulin like a haill roof-fu'! Ma stars, he'll gang mad, and O'Bronte 'ill gang mad, and we'll a' gang mad thegither, and the garden 'ill be ae great madhouse, and we'll tear ane anither to pieces, and eat ane anither up stoop and roop, and a' that 'ill be left o' us in the mornin 'ill be some bloody tramplin up and doun the beds, and that 'ill be a catastrophe waur—if possible—than that o' Sir Walter's Ayrshire Tragedy—and Mr Murray 'ill melodramateeze us in a piece ca'd the "Bluidy Battle o' the Bees;" and pit, boxes, and gallery 'ill a' be crooded to suffocation for a hunder nichts at haill price, to behold swoopin alang the stage the Last o' the Noctes Ambrosianæ!!!

English Opium-Eater. Then, indeed, will the "gaiety of nations be eclipsed," sun, moon, and stars may resign their commission in the sky, and old Nox reascend, never more to be dislodged from the usurpation of the effaced, obliterated, and extinguished universe.

Shepherd. Nae need o' exaggeration. But sure aneuch I wadna, for anither year, in that case, insure the life o' the Solar System.—(*Rising up.*)—Whare's a' the bees?

North. The hive is almost exterminated. You and Tickler have slain your dozens and your tens of dozens—O'Bronte has swallowed some scores—Cyprus made no bones of his allowance—and Mr De Quincey put to death—one. So much for the killed. The wounded you may see crawling in all direc-

tions, dazed and dusty; knitting their hind-legs together, and impotently attempting to unfurl their no longer gauzy wings. As to the missing, driven by fear from house and home, they will continue for days to be picked up by the birds, while expiring on their backs on the tops of thistles and binweeds —and of the living, perhaps a couple of hundreds may be on the combs, conferring on state-affairs, and——

Shepherd. Mournin for their queen. Sit up, Tickler.

[TICKLER *rises, and shakes himself.*

What'n a face!

North. 'Pon my soul, my dear Timothy, you must be bled forthwith—for in this hot weather inflammation and fever——

Shepherd. Wull sune end in mortification—then coma—and then death. We maun lance and leech him, Mr North, for we canna afford, wi' a' his failins, to lose Southside.

Tickler. Lend me your arm, Kit——

North. Take my crutch, my poor dear fellow. How are you now?

Shepherd. Hoo are you noo?—Hoo are you noo?

English Opium-Eater. Mr Tickler, I would fain hope, sir, that, notwithstanding the assault of these infuriated insects, which in numbers without number numberless, on the upsetting——

Tickler. Oh! oh!—Whoh! whoh!—Whuh! whuh!

Shepherd. That comes o' wearin nankeen pantaloons without drawers, and thin French silk stockins wi' open gushets, and nae neckcloth, like Lord Byron. I find corduroys and tap-boots impervious to a' mainner o' insecks, bees, wasps, hornets, ants, midges, clegs, and, warst o' a'—the gad. By the time the bite reaches the skin, the venom's drawn out by ever so mony plies o' leather, linen, and wurset—and the spat's only kittly. But (*putting his hand to his face*) what's this?—Am I wearin a mask?—a fause-face wi' a muckle nose? Tell me, Mr North, tell me, Mr De Quinshy, on the honours o' twa gentlemen as you are, am I the noo as ugly as Mr Tickler?

North. 'Twould be hard to decide, James, which face deserves the palm; yet—let me see—let me see—I think—I think, if there be indeed some slight shade of—What say you, Mr De Quincey?

English Opium-Eater. I beg leave, without meaning any disrespect to either party, to decline delivering any opinion on a subject of so much delicacy, and——

Tickler and Shepherd (*guffawing*). What'n a face! what'n a face! O! what'n a face!

English Opium-Eater. Gentlemen, here is a small pocket-mirror, which, ever since the year——

Shepherd. Dinna be sae chronological, sir, when a body's sufferin. Gie's the glass (*looks in*),—and that's ME? Blue, black, ochre, gambooshe, purple, pink, and—*green!* Bottle-nosed—wi' een like a piggie's! The Owther o' the *Queen's Wake!* I maun hae my pictur taen by John Watson Gordon, set in diamonds, and presented to the Empress o' Russia, or some ither croon'd head. I wunner what wee Jamie wad think! It is a phenomena o' a fizzionamy—An' hoo sall I get out the stings?

North. We must apply a searching poultice.

Shepherd. O' raw veal?

Tickler (*taking the mirror out of the Shepherd's hand*). Ay!

North. 'Twould be dangerous, Timothy, with that face, to sport Narcissus.

> "Sure such a pair were never seen,
> So aptly form'd to meet by nature!"

Ha! O'Bronte?

[O'BRONTE *enters the Arbour, still under the influence of opium.* What is your opinion of these faces?

O'Bronte. Bow—wow—wow—wow—Bow—wow—wow—wow!

Shepherd. He taks us for Eskymaws.

North. Say rather seals, or sea-lions.

O'Bronte. Bow—wow—wow—wow—Bow—wow—wow—wow!

Shepherd. Laugh'd at by a dowg!—Wha are ye?

[JOHN *and* BETTY *enter the Arbour with basins and towels, and a phial of leeches.*

North. Let me manage the worms—Lively as fleas.

[MR NORTH, *with tender dexterity, applies six leeches to the* SHEPHERD'S *face.*

Shepherd. Preens—preens—preens—preens![1]

[1] *Preens*—pins.

North. Now, Tickler.

[*Attempts, unsuccessfully, to perform the same kind office to* TICKLER.

Your sanguineous system, Timothy, is corrupt. They won't fasten.

Shepherd. Wunna they sook him? I find mine hangin cauld frae temple to chaft, and swallin—there's ane o' them played plowp intil the basin.

North. Betty—the salt.

Shepherd. Strip them, Leezy. There's anither.

North. Steady, my dear Timothy, steady; ay! there he does it, a prime worm—of himself a host. Sir John Leech.

Shepherd. You're no feared for bluid, Mr De Quinshy?

English Opium-Eater. A little so—of my own.

Shepherd. I wuss Mr Wordsworth's auld leech-gatherer was here to gie us his opinion o' thae worms. It's a gran' subjeck for a poem—Leech-Gatherin! I think I see the body gaun intil the pool, knee-deep in mud, and bringin them out stickin till his taes. There's whiles mair genius in the choice o' a subjeck, than in the execution. I wunner Mr Wordsworth never thocht o' composin a poem in the Spenserian stanza, or Miltonic blanks, on a "Beggar sittin on a stane by the roadside crackin lice in the head o' her bairn." What's in a name?

"A louse
By any other name would bite as sharp;"

and he micht ca't—for he's fond o' soundin words,—see the "Excursion" *passim*—"The Plague o' Lice," and the mother o' the brat would personify the ministering angel. Poetry would shed a halo round its pow—consecrate the haunted hair, and beautify the very vermin.

English Opium-Eater. I observe that a state of extreme languor has succeeded excitement, and that O'Bronte has now fallen asleep. Hark! a compressed whine, accompanied by a slight general convulsion of the whole muscular system, indicates that the creature is in the dream-world.

Shepherd. In dookin! or fechtin—or makin up to a——

North. Remove the apparatus.

[JOHN *and* BETTY *carry away the basins, pitchers, phial, towels, &c. &c.*

Shepherd. Hoo's my face noo?

North. Quite captivating, James. That dim discoloration sets off the brilliancy of your eyes to great advantage; and I am not sure if the bridge of your nose as it now stands be not an improvement.

Shepherd. Weel, weel, let's say nae mair about it. That's richt, Mr Tickler, to hang your silk handkerchy ower your face, like a nun takin the veil. Whare were we at?

North. We were discussing the commercial spirit, James, which is now the ruling—the reigning spirit of our age and country.

Shepherd. The Fable o' the Bees was an Episode.

North. Will you be so good, Tickler, as repeat to Mr Hogg, who I believe was not attending to you at the time, what you said about—Credit.

Tickler. I conceive, Mr Hogg, that within these last thirty years the facilities of credit in all the transactions of trade have been carried to a ruinous extent. Credit has been granted from one house of trade to another upon a much less jealous estimate of their respectability than heretofore; and farther, it has been the general spirit of all houses to avail themselves, to a far greater extent than formerly, of their own power of commanding credit, so as greatly to enlarge the proportion of their actual transactions to their actual capital. It has been the effect of the same spirit, that numberless traders in those inferior departments of trade, in which the circulation of their own documents of debt as money was dreamt of, have extensively put them forth; and it has been the last excess of the system, that vouchers of transactions, which had never taken place, have been put into circulation, to no inconsiderable extent, as documents of real debt.

English Opium-Eater. Ay, Mr Tickler; and to crown the system, and consummate the work, those houses which are to the Commercial World the especial managers of Credit, and the organs, I may say, of Circulation to the documents of credit, in part acting upon, and in part yielding, to the same spirit, have created, or carried to an extent before unknown, the creation of a species of documents of their own—namely, of debt created, either by the deposit in their hands of such vouchers as you have spoken of (in which case it might be said they enlarged the operations of credit by substituting their own high responsibility for the doubtful or obscure credit of the

vouchers made over to them ;) or, though in their nature essentially vouchers of debt, they have been granted upon no debt whatever, but as money upon securities more or less scrupulously taken :—In which case, it may be said, that these Houses, as far as they ascertained well their security, and were themselves responsible, availed themselves of a Commercial Form to give the utmost extent to legitimate credit.—But, as far as they acted upon insufficient security, or beyond their own responsibility, that they gave their names to authenticate to the public by false vouchers an unreal and illusory credit.

North. Here then, sir, is an indisputable instance of credit acting with injurious force in accelerating the operations of commerce. And methinks, Mr De Quincey, I see in those violent extinctions of credit, and the ruinous consequences they spread around them, the symptoms of a general and fearful disease. I see in the application of such terms as avidity, vehemence of activity, passion—if they are just—to the commercial transactions of a great people, indications of some most disordered condition among them ; and above all, I recognise in the change of habits, manners, and character, throughout all the people of the land, which these years have witnessed, an acceleration of commercial activity far beyond what the welfare of society demands—disordering and menacing disorders.

Tickler. It is all very bad, sir. See how the fluctuations of commerce, which carry life to one part of a country, and leave distress in another, will be more frequent and extreme, as the activity of commerce increases.

English Opium-Eater. Yea : all the powers of Nature proceed by change—that change includes destruction and production ; but in slow change, the destruction is silent decay ; in rapid change, it is a desolation.

Shepherd. Said ye, sir, that the prosperity o' commerce includes in it a sort o' destruction ?

English Opium-Eater. I did. Its improvements are founded on injury ; for the improvement is the raising of some above those over whom the improvement is made. Thus we know that many of the great improvements in our manufactures, though they have advanced the prosperity of the country, have spread much injury where they were first introduced ;

in many places of old-established trade which have made great advancement, many of the old houses have quite sunk; and the outcry of the people, and the remonstrances of the wealthier classes to the authorities of the country against improvement in other places, are all evidence of the inherent tendency of commercial advancement to depress while it raises; and therefore furnish grounds for an opinion that rapid commercial prosperity will be at all times throwing down great numbers into utter indigence and misery, overwhelming by the suddenness of their calamity those who in slower change might have foreseen and escaped one after the other from impending poverty.

North. And then, sir, these parts of trade thus suspended, have themselves, perhaps, been rapidly increasing; so that it falls upon a portion of the people in a state of rapid increase, who meet it with a greater shock—on large families—and families, too, from long habits of indulgence, severer sufferers in distress, and less able to extricate themselves from it.

Tickler. Besides, in a country urging on like ours so impetuously in commercial enterprise, there is another consideration. Is there not a sort of sacrifice of the labouring people to the insatiable appetite for wealth of their employers? A most inordinate demand for labour has thus been created; for, observe, Gents, that I consider not this present juncture of affairs at all—But what is the commercial spirit of the age and country? Thus sex and age have been swept into the work with no discrimination. Thus the wife and mother of the family has been called from her own place of duty, to be made an instrument of work,—girls of the tenderest age have been called into the manufactory, and grow up to the age of wives and mothers, with no knowledge of their duties, as instruments of work; and boys that should become the Men of the Community, immersed from their early years in noxious employments, and oppressed with interminable labour, rise up a deteriorated race—susceptible of the appetites of men, but bereft of that vigorous spirit which ought to mark the manhood of a people; and which, if it contains the violence of passion, contains also its generosity; contains, too, the principle of stubborn endurance, and of hardy contention with any severer fortune. And how hung upon that trade, and trembling with every breath that shakes it, is a family which only

subsists, while father, and wife, and children, are all racked with employment? What sort of population will that country possess to meet the vicissitudes of trade itself,—and those far greater vicissitudes which the political changes of the world throw into it?

English Opium-Eater. Say,—what is the bulwark of a people—the foundation of its greatness and the substance of its power?—The virtue of the people; their courage, their independence, the severe fortitude of their souls, their hearts filled with just and strong loves, the power of their happiness. This is the conception we form of the people of this island from north to south. This is the character which all tongues have spoken—which has been avouched from age to age—the traditionary faith received by our childhood; and now we look around, and tremble to discover that the dream has passed away from the land. The overflow of wealth has run through it, unsettling all ancient conditions—breaking up the bonds of life, casting, even upon the husbandman amidst his fields, the restless, ungoverned, aspiring spirit of commerce—dazzling and blinding the imaginations of the people, and scattering among them the vices of prosperity, if it has not brought them its enjoyments.

Shepherd. Dinna mak me despond o' the kintra, Mr De Quinshy. Hoo aften, when a's black in natur, outbursts the sun, and the warld's filled wi' licht! Oh man! but there's a majestic meaning in thae twa words—GREAT BRITAIN! Think ye it 'ill ever hae a Decline and Fa' like the Roman Empire?

English Opium-Eater. It seemeth alike to my reason and my imagination, Immortal.

Shepherd. And then think, sir, o' the march o' intelleck. That strengthens a state.

English Opium-Eater. It does. But not without the flow of feeling.

Shepherd. Capital! I was just gaun to hae said that, when you took the words out o' my mouth.

English Opium-Eater. We want not, Mr Hogg, a quantity of reasonable, contented, steady, sober, industrious inhabitants—mere Chineses, and nothing more; but we want men, who, if invaded, will spring up as one man—loving their ancestors, who cannot feel their gratitude——

Shepherd. It would be unreasonable to expeck it——

English Opium-Eater. ——and doing everything for their posterity, who have done and can do nothing for them——

Shepherd. Gie them first time to get intil existence—and then they'll——

English Opium-Eater. ——men among whom crime is restrained, not by a vigilant police, but by an awful sense of right and wrong—who love their soil, and not only see it to be rich, but feel it to be sacred—yea! to whom poverty and its scanty hard-wrung pittances are the gift of God——

Shepherd. That's roosin! You're an eloquent——

English Opium-Eater. ——who are sustained and animated in this life, by the operation on their minds of their convictions of another—a people in whose vigorous spirit joy is strong, under all external pressure, and who, stooping out of the low doors of their huts—clay-built, perhaps, yet flower-covered—hold up smiling faces in the sunshine, and from their bold foreheads fling back the blue beauty of their native skies.

Shepherd. "Fling back the blue beauty o' their native skies!" I'll bring in that in my speech, the first time I return thanks for my health at a public denner.

English Opium-Eater. I have been speaking, sir, of Scotland—a country naturally poor——

Shepherd. No sae naturally poor 's it looks like, sir. In the Kerse o' Gowrie the sile's fifty yards deep—a fine rich broon black moold, that shoots up wheat and beans twunty feet high;—and even in the Forest, what wi' the decay o' great auld aik-trees, and what not, there's sic a deposit, that in diggin wells, you hae to gang doun amaist to the verra centre-pint o' the yerth, afore ye can get quit o' the loam, and jingle wi' your pick again' the grevvel. The Heelans to be sure's geyan stany—perfeckly mountawneous a'thegither—but there, sir, you hear the lowin o' cattle on a thousan' hills—and the river-fed glens (naturally puir indeed!) arena they rich wi' the noblest o' a' craps?—craps o' men, sir (to say naething the noo o' the snooded lasses), that

"Plaided and plumed in their tartan array,"

(ane o' the best lines that, in a' poetry), hae frichtened the French out o' their senses time and place without number, and immemorial, frae Fontenoy to Waterloo?

English Opium-Eater. I do not disesteem your national enthusiasm, Mr Hogg, but I must not suffer it to disturb the course of my observations ; — and I was about to say, that in *richer* and merry England, there may be less of that dignity of which I spoke, because less is overcome, — the spirit may be less free even, perhaps, in some respects,—because the body is better endowed ;—yet hath not such a people great conceptions ? Yea, the people of England *feel* the greatness of their country—because they *know* that she has been always free and enlightened from Alfred—Magna Charta—the Reformation—the Armada—the SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHT —that she has ever been awful in the sight of nations.—And since, sir, you speak of France, *our* Harry it was that, like a lion, ramped among the Lilies—*our* Black Prince, that, in his tent with captive kings——

Shepherd. 'Twas lucky for them baith that they never tried the fechtin on this side o' the Tweed, wi' Scotchmen, or aiblins, wi' bluidy noses, they would hae bitten the dust at Roslin or Bannockburn.

English Opium-Eater. I forget the precise lines, sir, but Shakespeare makes some one in that noble drama, *Henry the Fifth*, speak of the " weasel Scot," who, during his conquest of France, " stole in, and sucked his princely eggs "——

Shepherd. And a great goose he was for layin them in an unprotected nest amang the nettles. Haw, haw, haw !

North. Gentlemen, gentlemen ! But let me throw a little light upon the subject.

[MR NORTH *touches a spring, and the chandelier pendant from the roof of the Arbour is set suddenly in stars.*

Shepherd. My sowl burns and loups within me — and I feel as if I could write upon the spat a glorious poem !

Tickler. On what subject ?

Shepherd. On ony subjeck, or on nae subjeck. Oh ! but it's a divine idea—the idea o' immortal fame !

English Opium-Eater. There are two great sources of the energy of the human mind, Mr Hogg ;—one, Delight in the works of God, from which the energy of Genius springs—and one, Pride in its own powers, from which springs the energy of Ambition.

Shepherd. In ma opinion, baith thae twa sources o' energy are in a' minds whatsomever, sir.

English Opium-Eater. Yes, Mr Hogg, they are; but in different allotment. One, either by nature, or by the sources of life, will be predominant. If the delight in good, in natural and moral beauty, be the stronger principle, then all the energy that springs from the consciousness of strength and skill, and from the pleasure of activity, falls into subservience to the nobler power; and those men are produced, who, if their talents are great, and fall in with great occasions, receive the name of teachers, deliverers, fathers of their countries. But if imagination is weak—and the delight in contemplation of all that is great and beautiful in the world, has little sway in the mind, but the pride in its own powers is strong, — then spring up the afflicters of mankind, — then comes that Love of Glory, which is not, as in nobler minds, a generous delight in the sympathy and approbation of their fellow-men, but an insatiable thirst for renown, that the voice of mankind, though it were of their groans, may bear witness to their transcendent might, and feed their own consciousness of it, — then come those disordered and tormenting passions, stung by rival glory, and maddened by opposition, which engender the malignant character of genius. For if there be genius in such a mind, it cannot maintain its nature against such evil influences, but lends itself to any the most accursed work.

North. Nor matters it what the power may be, sir, whether merely external, as from birth and place, which, without much native power, has made the common tyrants of the world—or whether it be the intensest power of an extraordinary mind. If it be intellectual glory and empire among men which it seeks, it will tear down Truth and set up Falsehood——

Shepherd. Ay, gin it can.

North. And it can, and often does, shaming morality and even religion out of the world. In all cases alike, there is the same subserviency of the energies of genius to the energy of ambition. But look, James, to their respective works. The spirit of genius is naturally creative; its works have in themselves a principle of duration — because it creates in conformity to the laws of nature—and therefore the laws of nature preserve its works. The arts which genius has invented, maintain themselves by their importance to mankind. Its beautiful productions are treasured up by their love, and

delivered over from one generation to another,—the laws it has given blend themselves with the existence of society,—the empires it has established stand by the wisdom in which they were founded. But the spirit of ambitious power is naturally a destroyer; and when it attempts to create, it departs from its character and fails. It creates against nature, and therefore nature rejects its works, and the process of her laws shall overthrow them. It shall build up in the kingdom of mind, error, superstition, and illusion, which shall tyrannise for a time, and then pass away for ever. It shall build up military strength and political dominion—a fabric reaching to heaven, and overshadowing the earth. But it is built up, not in wisdom, but in folly; its principle of destruction is within itself, and when its hour is come, lo! it crumbles into dust.

Tickler. Good, North; at least tolerable—not much amiss.

Shepherd. A hantle better nor onything ye'll say the nicht.

Tickler. Napoleon and Alfred!—The one is already dead—the other will live for ever. Alfred! the mighty Warrior, who quelled and drove afar from him the terrible enemy that had baffled the prowess of all his predecessors—the Father of his people, who listened to all complaints, and redressed all wrongs—the Philosopher, who raised up a barbarous age towards the height of his own mind, and founded the civilisation of England—the Legislator, whose laws, after a thousand years, make part of the liberties of his country!

Shepherd. Better than I expected. Tak breath, and at it again, tooth and nail, lip and nostril.

Tickler. Our imagination cannot dream of a greater man than this, or of one happier in his greatness. Yet, we do not, I opine, Mr De Quincey, think of Alfred as strongly possessed by a Love of Fame. We think of him as conscious of his own high thoughts, and living in the elevation of his nature. But he seems to us too profoundly affected by his great designs, to care for the applauses of the race for whose benefit his mighty mind was in constant meditation. He seems to us rather absorbed in the philosophic dream of the wide change which his wisdom was to produce on the character of his country; and all that he did for man, to have desired the reflection, not of his own glory, but of their happi-

ness. The thoughtful moral spirit of Alfred did not make him insensible to the sympathies of men; but it was self-satisfied, and therefore sought them not; and accordingly, in our conception of his character, the Love of Glory makes no part, but would, I think, be felt at once to be inconsistent with its simple and sedate grandeur.

Shepherd. You've acquitted yoursel weel, Mr Tickler, and had better haud your tongue for the rest o' the nicht——

North.

"Lest aught less great should stamp you mortal."

Shepherd. O man! Timothy, what for are you sae severe, and satirical, and sardonic, in your natur? A girn—or a toss o' your head—or a grumph,'s a' you aften condescend to gie in answer to a remark made in the natural order o' discoorse—but it's no richt o' you—for folk doesna like the superceelious in society—though it may pass current wi' a tall man on the streets.—I'm thinkin you've forgotten your face?

Tickler. I vote we change the Arbour for the Lodge. 'Tis cold—positively chill—curse the climate!

English Opium-Eater. Our sensations are the sole——

Shepherd. If you're cauld, sir, you may gang and warm yoursel at the kitchen fire. But we'se no stir——

Tickler. Curse the climate!

Shepherd. Cleemat! Where's the cleemat like it, I would wush to ken? Greece? Italy? Persia? Hindostan? Poo—poo—poo! Wha could thole months after months o' ae kind o' wather, were the sky a' the while lovely as an angel's ee? Commend me to the bold, bricht, blue, black, boisterous, and blusterin beauty o' the British heavens.

Tickler. But what think ye, James, of a tropic tornado, or hurricano?

Shepherd. I wouldna gie a doit for a dizzen. Swoopin awa a toun o' wooden cages, wi' ane bigger than the lave, ca'd the governor's house, and aiblins a truly contemptible kirk, floatin awa into rottenness sae muckle colonial produce, rice, rum, or sugar, and frichtenin a gang o' neeggers! It mayna roar sae loud nor sae lang, perhaps, our ain indigenous Scottish thunner; but it rairs loud and lang aneuch too, to satisfy ony reasonable Christian that has the least regard for his lugs. Nae patriot, Mr Tickler, would undervalue his native kintra's

thunner. Hear it spangin—hap, step, and loup—frae Cruachan to Ben Nevis! The red-deer—you micht think them a' dead—and that their antlers were rotten branches—sae stane-like do they couch atween the claps—without ae rustle in the heather. Black is the sky as pitch—but every here and there, shootin up through the purple gloom,—for whan the lichtnin darts out its fiery serpents it is purple,—lo! bricht pillars and pinnacles illuminated in the growlin darkness, and then gone in a moment in all their glory, as the day-nicht descends denser doun upon the heart o' the glens, and you only *hear* the mountain-tap; for wha can see the thousand-year-auld cairn up-by yonder, when a' the haill heaven is ae coal-cloud—takin fire every noo and then as if it were a furnace—and then indeed by that flash may you see the cairn like a giant's ghost. Up goes the sable veil—for an eddy has been churnin the red river into spray, and noo is a whirlwind—and at that updriving see ye not a hundred snaw-white torrents tumblin frae the tarns, and every cliff rejoicin in its new-born cataract? There is the van o' anither cloud-army frae the sea. What 'ill become o' the puir ships! A dismal word to think on in a tempest—lee-shore! There's nae wund noo—only a sort o' sugh. Yet the cloud-army comes on in the dead-march—and that is the muffled drum. Na—that flash gaed through my head, and I fear I'm stricken blind! Rattle—rattle—rattle—as if great granite stanes were shot out o' the sky doun an invisible airn-roof, and plungin sullenly intil the sea. The eagles daurna scream—but that demon the raven, croaks—croaks—croaks,—is it out o' the earth, or out o' the air, cave, or cloud? My being is cowed in the insane solitude. But pity me—bless me—is that a wee bit Hieland lassie sittin in her plaid aneath a stane, a' by hersel, far frae hame, ha'in been sent to look after the kids—for I declare there is ane lyin on her bosom, and its mither maun be dead! Dinna be be frichtened, my sweet Mhairi, for the lichtnin shanna be allowed by God to touch the bonny blue ribbon round thy yellow hair!—There's a bit o' Scottish thunner and lichtnin for you, Mr Tickler, and gin it doesna satisfy you, aff to the troppics for a tornawdoo!

English Opium-Eater. You paint in words, mine admirable Shepherd, Nature in all her moods and aspects——

Shepherd. Few poets are fonder o' the face o' Natur than

mysel, sirs; yet a man shouldna let onything liko the chief pairt o' his happiness in this warld be at the mercy o' its Beauty—the slave o' the ear and ee—which that man must be wha habitually draws his veetal bliss frae the bonny colours or sounds o' the mere earth. The human sowl aught to be at last totally independent o' the outer creation, except for meat, drink, house, and claes. I say at last; for at first, and for a lang, lang time, we maun hang, like sookin babies, at the breast o' mother Natur, or gang stacherin[1] at her knees while she is actin in the capacity and character o' a great big muckle Dry Nurse.

Tickler. Skelping your dolp, James, with storm, sleet, snow, and rain, and, by one and the same benign but severe process, invigorating at once head, heart, and hurdies.

Shepherd. Fie, fie—that's coorse! What I mean's this: A man, wha aiblins thinks himsel a poet, and wha we shall alloo has poetical propensities, has, by the goodness of Providence, been set doun in a house on a gentle eminence, commandin a beautifu' bend o' the blue braided sky overhead, hills and mountains piling theirsels in regular gradation up, up, up,—and far, far, far aff and awa, till you kenna whilk are their rosy summits, and whilk the rosy clouds—and, beyond a foreground o' woods, groves, halls, and cottages, exquisitely interspersed wi' fields and meadows, which, in the dimmest days, still seem spots of sunshine,—a loch! or, supposin the scene in England, a lake, a day's journey round about, always blue or bright, or, if at ony time black, yet then streaked gloriously wi' bars o' sunburst, sae that in the midst o' the foamy gloom o' Purgatory are seen serenely rising the Isles o' Paradise.[2]

North. Poussin!

Shepherd. ——Deil mean him to be cheerfu',[3] and crouse, and talkative, and eloquent on the poetical and picturesque—and, to croon a', proud as Lucifer! But only observe, sirs, the gross delusion into which the cretur has couped ower head and ears, sae lang syne that there's nae chance o' his

[1] *Stacherin*—staggering.

[2] This is a very good description of Elleray, Professor Wilson's seat on the heights of Windermere.

[3] "Deil mean him to be cheerfu'," &c.,—that is, such a person will have no difficulty in being cheerful, &c.

recovery in this life. He absolutely, sirs, thinks that glorious scene—*Himsel;* Loch Lomond or Windermere—*Himsel!*—Forgettin, that if either o' them were struck out o' being, the beauty o' the earth would be shorn of its beams—or at least all England and all Scotland—Cockneydom excluded—be desolate; whereas you ken, sir, that were the bit triflin cretur himsel killed by a cherry-stane stickin in the throat o' him, or a sour-cider colic, in nine days he would be nae mair missed in his ain parish—I had amaist said on his ain estate—than a defunck cock-sparrow.

Tickler. And what, pray, James, is your drift?

Shepherd. My drift? Truthwards on the sea o' philosophy. The delusion's the same wi' a' kinds o' wealth—bonds, bills, bank-stock, or what not,—the man mistakes them for himsel; but the looker-on is free frae that delusion—and sees that in truth he is as poor as Lazarus. Therefore, rug the ane awa frae Loch Lomond or Windermere, I say, and crib, cabin, and confine him in a back parlour in some dingy toun, commanding a view o' a score o' smoky chimleys, and then look into his eyes, and listen unto his voice for his poetry. He is seen and heard to be a Sumph. Rug, in like manner, the man o' money frae his bags,—let the feet o' some great Panic trample out his Ploom,[1] as you or me would squash a sour Ploom-damass wi' the heel o' our shae, and in sowl as in body behold a—Powper![2] But bring the POET frae his dwelling amang the licht o' risin and settin suns, and amang the darkness o' thunderous clouds, sae grim that they seem to threaten earthquake,—frae amang the pearlins, and jewels, and diamonds o' mornin, wha adorns the bleakest heath she loves wi' gossamery dewdraps, finer, and fairer, and richer far than all the gems that ever swarthy miners dug out o' the subterranean galleries o' Golconda and Peru,—frae amang the meridian magnificence o' lights and shadows, smiling like angels, or a-frown like demons, shiftin or stationary on the many-coloured mountain's breast, till the earth seems the sea—frae amang the one-star-y-crowned gloaming pensive wi' the wood-lark's sang, or mair than pensive, profoundly melancholy, wi' the far-aff croonin o' the cushat hidden somewhere or ither in the heart o' some auld wood,—frae amang the moonlicht that, after it has steeped a' the heavens, has a still serene flood o'

[1] *Plumb*=£100,000. [2] *Powper*—pauper.

lustre to pour doun on the taps o' trees, and ancient ruins, and lakes that seem to burn wi' fire, and a' ower the dreamy slumber o' the toil-forgettin Earth!

English Opium-Eater. Exquisite!

Tickler. It beats cock-fighting.

North. Go on, James—keep moving.

Shepherd. Clap him in a garret in Grub Street, and yet shall he, like a fixed star, hang on the bosom o' infinitude, or like a planet pursue his flight, in music, round the Sun.

Omnes. Hurra—hurra—hurra! The Shepherd for ever! Hurra—hurra—hurra!

Shepherd. Sear his een wi' red-het plates o' airn, or pierce their iris wi' fire-tipped skewers, and soon as the agony has grown dull in his brain-nerves, he will see the Panorama o' Natur still, Mont Blanc and his eagles, Palmyra in the desert, the river o' Amazons, and the sail-swept Ocean wi' a' his isles!

English Opium-Eater. Author of *Kilmeny!* that is Imagination! To the sumph (an admirable word), everything is nothing—to the man of genius, nothing is everything.

Shepherd. Eh?

English Opium-Eater. See how genius throws all that arises within itself, out of itself, making that which in respect of the reality is subjective, in respect of the effect or apprehension, objective.

Shepherd. Eh?

English Opium-Eater. The joy and the love spring in itself, and remain in itself; but it flings them forth into the object, scattering light as from a golden urn. That joy and that love, now poured upon the object, appears to genius as a property or nature residing therein, which property or nature, gloriously self-deceived by the divinity it bears, it thenceforth acknowledges as—Beauty. In the same way, or a similar, the mind has before given colour to the grass, and light to the sun. Only, that in the attribution of these merely physical properties, it appears to do no more than remove that which is present to it in the eye, to a greater distance from it, out of the eye. Whereas in beauty, you find an union of your soul with the object—that is Love. Develop love infinitely, and you develop beauty.

Shepherd. I believe that, sir, to be indeed God's truth.

English Opium-Eater. Both beauty and sublimity—you may remember we touched on these subjects at the last Noctes, and, indeed, an hour ago—appear to be visible in visible objects. When we begin to think, we cannot believe that they are otherwise; and we abhor the metaphysical attempt to take the qualities out of the objects, to make them alien to the eye. Why? Because that attempt dissolves the world. It makes that whereon our love, our soul, has rested as on rock-strong Reality, unreal—mere Figured Air!

Shepherd. It would seem, indeed, my dear sir, that our verra life is taen frae us by sic speculations.

English Opium-Eater. Be it so. The great question is, will we know, or will we have ignorant bliss? Know we must. We very soon become convinced, by divers reflections, that our first natural and inevitable idea is not strictly true, that the Beauty and the Sublimity are not *so* imbedded and inherent in the objects as they once appeared to be. We must give up more and more, and shall find no rest till we recognise that they are totally of the mind. Then, indeed, we obtain a support—a life—of a different and more sufficient kind than that which was at first taken away, in the clear consciousness of the creative and illimitable power of the mind. We can rest well in either extreme—but between them, rest is there none.

Shepherd. What for do you no write poetry, Mr Quinshy—seein that ye are a poet? But you're prouder o' bein' a pheelosopher.

English Opium-Eater. There are two principal ways, Mr Hogg, in which every object can be considered—two chief aspects under which they present themselves to us—the philosophical and the poetical—as they *are* to reason, as they *seem* to imagination.

Shepherd. Can you, sir, make that great distinction good?

English Opium-Eater. Perhaps there is no absolute distinction in the world of nature, or in the human soul. But let me say, we may consider all things, either as intellect without feeling tends to consider them, or intellect with feeling, *i. e.*, causatively and passionately. The great, the most earnestly-desiring inquiry that pure reason makes, is of the causes of things. For this end it comes into the world. To intellect thus working, what it sees is nothing—for what it sees are

signs only of what has preceded—and, therefore, such speculation dissolves the fabric to construct it over again. It builds out of destruction. But intellect working by feeling, *i. e.*, imagination, does quite the reverse. What is, is everything to it. It beholds and loves. Imagination educes from its objects all the passion, all the delight that they are capable of yielding it. It desires, it cares for nothing more. Hence philosophy and poetry are at war with each other, but they are powers which may belong to the service of the same kingly mind. Imagination lives in the present—in the shown—in the apparent—in the *φαινομενον*. From the whole, as it is presented, springs some mighty passion. Disturb the actual presentment, and the passion is gone.

> " If but a beam of sober reason play,
> Then Fancy's fairy frost-work melts away."

That line, beautiful as it is, and true—is yet inadequate to express the demolition, when IS and SEEMS encounter, and the latter is overthrown.

Shepherd. Plawto poured out his pheelosophy in Dialogues —and sae, sir, do you—and I'll back ye again' the auld Trojan —that is, Grecian—for a barrel o' eisters. I never understood metafeezics afore—but noo the distinction atween reason and imagination and their objects, is as plain as that atween the pike-staff o' a sergeant o' militia and the sceptre o' Agamemnon.

North. You have been touching, my dear Opium-Eater, on abstruse matters indeed, but with a pencil of light. Certainly, the effect of right metaphysical study is to dissolve the whole fabric of knowledge. Boscovich has metaphysicized matter, and shown that there need be none—that certain centres of attraction and repulsion are the only things needed. Others have metaphysicized vision. Now, two great bonds of our knowledge are—habit, and the feeling we annex to forms; and we repugn the breaking up of either. How our idea of a house, a palace, a kingdom, a man, the sea, is infused with feeling! To all doctrines that dissolve feelings or habits, we are naturally averse. They are painful—as, for example, that which denies that colour or beauty is in the objects—just like that further discovery of the world, which shows us that those whom we thought all-perfect, have great faults. But this is

a discipline we must go through—for we begin children and end spirits. There is but One good. There is but One deserving of all love. The discipline forms love in us, and gradually and successively breaks it off from all less objects, so that we remain with the affection, and Him the sole object fitted to it. He is to be all-in-all. The more you approach to total devotion, the more you unite high intellect and high feeling to stable and strong happiness.

English Opium-Eater. Sometimes there seems, sir, to be a simplicity of love that is happy in mere calm, but it is rare; and generally there is not happiness that is not built on the rock, Religion. Every less happiness is broken, imperfect, low, inconsistent, self-contradictory, full of wounds and flaws, or it remains solid by a low measure of understanding and sensibility.

North. Did Mallebranche[1] say that we see all things in God? It is not impossible that as our moral nature, to find itself entire, must rest in God, so our intellect must. We cannot be happy—we cannot be moral—we cannot know truth—except in him. Thus, it may be destined that our beginnings of life shall be on this earth, as if this earth were all. We love the parents that gave us birth, the spot on which we grow, all things living and lifeless about our cradle. We love this moist and opaque earth, which is our soil for our downward-striking roots—here we receive the sunshine and the dews—and we begin Terrene. Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own. The homely nurse doth all she can.[2] There seem, indeed, immense powers exerted about us to bind us, to shut us up in earth and mortality, to make us love finite things, centre and limit our desire in them, and be ourselves finite. All our pleasures, all our senses, all habits and all customs, seem to close us in; strong passions spring up and embrace things

[1] Nicholas Mallebranche, a distinguished French philosopher, died in 1715, aged seventy-seven.

[2] "Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came."

Wordsworth's Ode: *Intimations of Immortality*, &c.

finite; this is earth and the strength of earth. This is natural man—the child—*the day-darger*—the Savage. Is it not singular to see what a fitting there has been, and what quantities of power employed, to make terrestrial man? Yet, as if this were but a nursery or school, a place of preparation, lo! another end! For a power evolves, of which it seems the use to destroy and abolish what has been made with such pains, as if all that had been made were but fuel for this new fire to burn—a crop to be ploughed in for the true harvest. The fostered flesh has been strong. The spirit comes. If the spirit could have its force and course, the man should gradually tend towards heaven, as he wears from earth. He should mount continually. Morally, this is true; but is it not, my dear De Quincey, curious in metaphysics to see it true intellectually? To see the material world, that seemed so hard and ponderous, turned into a thought? To see intellect play with it, dallying between its existence and its non-existence? To see the intellect grow spiritual, till it has rejected cumbrous matter, and only knows and sees spirit?[1]

English Opium-Eater. That ingenious man, John Fearn,[2] with whom Dugald Stewart would not enter into discussion on a metaphysical question involving the whole philosophy of the Professor, has demonstrated that there is no matter, and is quite satisfied about it. Kant thought that there was, but that we could know nothing of it; that it was nothing in the least like what it appeared to us to be; existing as a cause of certain affections of our minds, but in no sort revealed to them—and even Sir Isaac Newton thought that the most solid-looking matter was a most delicate and airy network, if network it may be called, of which the infinitesimally invisible atoms were a thousand or a million times their own diameter distant from one another, and that all the real matter of the universe, compacted, might be contained in a cubic inch!

North. Ay, thus it is, sir, that metaphysicians and physicians concur in overthrowing and absolving our sensible know-

[1] The spirit of genuine speculative idealism speaks in these words. The *poetry*, however, of idealism is worth little without the *proof*.

[2] John Fearn was a very singular character, and a man of some originality of thought. He brooded for many years, like a gymnosophist, over metaphysics in the jungles of India. When he returned home he wrote books which nobody would read, and died, some years ago, a martyr to a bad and unattractive style of composition.

ledge. They teach us we are fools! and that what we take to be solid is the fabric of a vision!

English Opium-Eater. True. And is not philosophy, my dear Mr North, the very undoer of what nature has been doing from the beginning? To nature, Mr Hogg, the earth is flat—the sky a dome——

Shepherd. The ane green, the ither blue, and baith beautiful'—

English Opium-Eater. The sun moves—and Galileo is imprisoned for thinking otherwise. But intellect sees through the coloured cloud of things. It is an alchemic fire which fuses the substance of nature, annihilating its customary and known form to disclose its essence, which, alas! is not by us to be found! But we must conceive this utter disdain and rejection of the admitted world, by intellect in its giant, consummated power, and that is the only true idea of philosophy. Intellect, therefore, can have no rest but in Deity—and we have seen how metaphysical intellect is driven to this, when it comes to believe that there is no matter—nothing but a continual agency of Deity upon mind.

North. Just so do we find it excessively difficult, from looking at the world, to find the true relation of religion to man. The looking at the world naturally lowers to us the estimate of this relation, because there is so little religion in the world—hardly any—and we can scarcely believe everybody, here too, to be utterly in the wrong. We think the world must have common sense, and end in thinking the high notion of religion contrary to common sense, and visionary. But do not mankind err—and do we not know it? For you see that the multitude miss the End of Life. Have they found the possession of their highest faculties—innate in all? No—not one in a million. Have they found happiness? No—not generally. Look sublimely upon them, and you deplore them and their fate. What is human life then? Mixed. High affections mixed with low, religion with earth and sin, the finite with the infinite. Make an idea of man, and you inevitably take him at the highest, and exalt his life to be like him; but look at him existing, and you see bright fragments of this idea mixed with what you would fain reject from his life. But can this mixture be all that was intended, that is to be aimed at, to be required? Impossible. But we have not the invincible,

burning, aspiring spark in our thoughts—it is stifled and smothered — and therefore we hope neither for ourselves nor others. But see how those judge of others who feel on their own shoulders the untamed eagle-pinions. See how Christians judge, expect, require—the Saints, the Anchorites, the Holy Men who have walked on this world more present with another—for whom the veil of flesh has been lifted up or rent. Is it not strange that Brahmins, Christians, and Stoics, all come to one conclusion?

English Opium-Eater. A low philosophy, tending more and more to the elevation of the External, is prevalent among us at this day in England. Jeremy Bentham is preferred to Jeremy Taylor—and Paley has triumphed over Plato. All good and all evil is in the Will. The mind that can see the vulgar distinction between Faith and Works, must think that roots and fruits are not parts of the same tree—and expect to see the "golden balls" on a rotten stump.

Tickler. Jeremy Bentham and Paley are, nevertheless, both great writers.

English Opium-Eater. I shall not contradict you, sir.

North. Yes; that doctrine, while it exacts the most scrupulous adherence to the moral law, is at the same time the most cheering and consolatory of any in a world constituted as this is—far more so than any laxer doctrines contrived to flatter human weakness, and thereby encouraging vice, and causing misery. For, according to this doctrine, virtue and its ineffable rewards may be in the spirits of all, be their lot what it may. The slave in bonds may be a glorious freeman. He that seems to sit in darkness and the shadow of death, may be soaring in light and in life eternal. The sphere of action varies from the theatre of a kingdom—the world—to some obscure and narrow nameless nook; and if the future doom of men were to be according to the magnitude of their deeds, what would become of that portion of the race that passes away silently and unknown into seeming oblivion! But once allow that as the Will of a man's spirit has been, so shall he be judged by Him who gave it into his keeping, and the gates of heaven are flung wide open to all the uprisen generations of mankind, and the beggar that sat by the wayssides of this dreary earth, blind, paralytic, most destitute—but patient, unrepining, contented before the All-seeing eye

with his lot of affliction—for him will the heavens lift up their everlasting gates that he may enter in, even like a king in glory,—because his Will was good; while the conqueror, at whose name the world grew pale, may stand shivering far aloof, because while he had wielded the wills of others, he was most abject in his own, and, dazzled with outward pomp and shows, knew not that there was a kingdom in his own soul, in which it would have been far better to reign, because he who has been monarch there, exchanges an earthly for a spiritual crown, and when summoned from his throne on earth, awakens at the feet of a throne in heaven.

Shepherd. The coorse buffoonery—the indecent ribaldry o' the Noctes Ambrosianæ!!

English Opium-Eater. Spirit of Socrates, the smiling sage! whose life was love, I invoke thee to look down from heaven upon this blameless arbour, and bless "Edina's old man eloquent." Unsphere thy spirit, O Plato! or let it even, like some large and lustrous star, hang over the bower where oft in musing "melancholy sits retired" the grey-haired Wisdom-Seeker whom all Britain's youth adore, or "discourseth most excellent music" with lips on which, as on thine own, in infancy had swarmed——

Shepherd. For Heaven's sake, nae mention o' bees! That's a sair subjeck wi' me and Mr Tickler. Get on to some o' the lave.

English Opium-Eater. Nor thou, stern Stagirite! who nobly heldst that man's best happiness was "Virtuous Energy," avert thy face severe from the high moral "Teacher of the Lodge," of whom Truth declares that "he never lost a day."

Shepherd. That's bonny.

English Opium-Eater. From thy grove-gardens in the sky, O gracious and benign Epicurus! let drop upon that cheerful countenance the dews of thy gentle and trouble-soothing creed!

Shepherd. Od! I thocht Epicurus had been a great Epicure.

English Opium-Eater. And thou, O matchless Merryman o' the Frogs and the Clouds![1]——

Shepherd. Wha the deevil's he? The matchless Merryman o' the Frogs and Clouds!—That's opium. But hush your havers, Mr De Quinshy; and tell me, Mr North, what for ye didna come out to Innerleithen and fish for the silver medal of the St Ronan's Border Club? I'm thinkin ye was feared.

[1] Aristophanes.

North. I have won so many medals, James, that my ambition ἀιεὶ ἀριστευειν[1] is dead—and, besides, I could not think o' beating the Major.[2]

Shepherd. You beat the Major! You micht at baggy mennons, but he could gie ye a stane-wecht either at trouts or fish. He's just a warld's wunner wi' the sweevil, a warlock wi' the worm, and wi' the flee a feenisher. It's a pure pleesur to see him playin a pounder wi' a single hair. After the first twa-three rushes are ower, he seems to wile them wi' a charm awa into the side, ontil the gerss or the grevvel, whare they lie in the sunshine as if they were asleep. His tackle, for bricht airless days, is o' gossamere; and at a wee distance aff, you think he's fishin without ony line ava, till whirr gangs the pirn, and up springs the sea-trout, silver-bricht, twa yards out o' the water, by a delicate jerk o' the wrist, hyucked inextricably by the tongue clean ower the barb o' the Kirby-bend. Midge-flees!

North. I know the Major is a master in the art, James; but I will back the Professor[3] against him for a rump-and-dozen.

Shepherd. You would just then, sir, lose your rump. The Professor can fish nae better nor yoursel. You would make a pretty pair in a punt at the perches; but as for the Tweed, at trouts or sawmon, I'll back wee Jamie again' ye baith, gin ye'll only let me fish for him the bushy pools.[4]

North. I hear you, James. Sir Isaac Newton was no astronomer.

Shepherd. Wha's "Fluviatilis?"

North. I know not. But his Essays on Angling, in that excellent paper the *Edinburgh Observer*, are about the best I know out of THE MAGAZINE, and ought to be added to, and published in, a small pocket-volume.

Shepherd. Mr Boyd o' Innerleithen's issued Proposals and Prospectus o' a bit anglin beuky to be ca'd "Tweed and its Tributary Streams." You maun gie't a lift, sir.

North. I will, James. A good title; and my old landlord[5] is a good angler, and a good man.

[1] Always to excel.

[2] Major Mackay, a first-rate angler, and esteemed friend of Professor Wilson's.

[3] Wilson.

[4] Where deep wading is required.

[5] Professor Wilson and his family occupied Mr Boyd's house at Innerleithen in the summer of 1827.

Shepherd. That's towtological, and an anticleemacks; for wha ever heard o' a gude angler being a bad or indifferent man? I hae nae objection, sir, noo that there's nae argument, to say that you're a gude angler yoursel, and sae is the Professor.

North. James, these civilities touch. Your hand. In me the passion of the sport is dead—or say rather dull; yet have I gentle enjoyment still in the "Angler's silent Trade." But, heavens! my dear James! how in youth—and prime of manhood too—I used to gallop to the glens, like a deer, over a hundred heathery hills, to devour the dark-rolling river, or the blue breezy loch! How leaped my heart to hear the thunder of the nearing waterfall! and lo! yonder flows, at last, the long dim shallow rippling hazel-banked line of music among the broomy braes, all astir with back-fins over its surface; and now, that the *feed is on*, teeming with swift-shooting, bright-bounding, and silver-shining scaly life, most beauteous to behold, at every soft alighting of the deceptive lure, captivating and irresistible even among a shower of natural leaf-born flies a-swarm in the air from the mountain-woods!

Shepherd. Ay, sir, in your younger days you maun hae been a verra deevil.

North. No, James—

> "Nae maiden lays her scathe to me."

Poetry purified my passions; and, worshipping the Ideal, my spirit triumphed over mere flesh and blood, and was preserved in innocence by the Beautiful.

Shepherd. That's your ain account o' yoursel, sir. But your enemies tell anither tale——

North. And what do my enemies, in their utter ignorance, know of me? But to my friends, my character lies outspread, visible from bound to bound, just like a stretch of Highland prospect on the Longest Day, when, from morning to night, the few marbled clouds have all lain steadfast on the sky, and the air is clear, as if mist were but a thought of Fancy's dream.

Shepherd. What creelfu's you maun hae killed!

North. A hundred and thirty in one day in Loch Awe, James, as I hope to be saved—not one of them under——

Shepherd. A dizzen pun',—and twa-thirds o' them aboon't. A'thegither a ton. If you are gaun to use the lang-bow, sir, pu' the string to your lug, never fear the yew crackin, and send the grey-guse-feathered arrow first wi' a lang whiz, and then wi' a short thud, right intil the bull's ee, at ten score, to the astonishment o' the ghost o' Robin Hood, Little John, Adam Bell, Clym o' the Clough, and William o' Cloudeslee.

North. My poor dear old friend, M'Neil of Hayfield[1]—God rest his soul—it is in heaven—at ninety as lifeful as a boy at nineteen—held up his hands in wonder as under a shady tree I laid the hundred and thirty yellow Shiners on the bank at his feet. Major Mackay,

> " A lambkin in peace, and a lion in war,"

acknowledged me as a formidable rival now in angling as in leaping of yore. Auchlian,[2] God bless him, the warm-hearted and the hospitable—long may he live and be happy, among the loving and beloved—from that day began to respect the Lowlanders. And poor Stevenson, mild and brave—a captain in the navy, James—now no more—with his own hands wreathed round my forehead a diadem of heather-bells, and called me King of the Anglers.

Shepherd. Poo! That was nae day's fishin ava, man, in comparison to ane o' mine on St Mary's Loch. To say naething about the countless sma' anes, twa hunder about half a pun', ae hunder about a haill pun', fifty about twa pun', five-and-twenty about fowre pun', and the lave rinnin frae half a stane up to a stane and a half, except about half-a-dizzen, aboon a' wecht, that put Geordie Gudefallow and Huntly Gordon[3] to their mettle to carry them pechin[4] to Mount Benger on a haun-barrow.

North. Well done, Ulysses.

Shepherd. Anither day, in the Megget, I caucht[5] a cartfu'. As it gaed doun the road, the kintra-folk thocht it was a cart-fu' o' herrins—for they were a' precesely o' ae size to an unce

[1] On the banks of Loch Awe. Major Mackay was Mr M'Neil's son-in-law.

[2] A Highland laird.

[3] The friend and amanuensis of Sir Walter Scott. For an interesting account of his connection with Scott, see Lockhart's *Life*, vol. ix. p. 195 *et seq.*, second edition.

[4] *Pechin*—panting.

[5] *Caucht*—caught.

—and though we left twa dizzen at this house—and four dizzen at that house—and a gross at Henderland—on countin them at hame in the kitchen, Leezy made them out forty dizzen, and Girzzy forty-twa, aught; sae a dispute ha'in arisen, and o' coorse a bet, we took the census ower again, and may these be the last words I sall ever speak, gin they didna turn out to be Forty-Five!

North. The heaviest Fish I ever killed was in the river Awe—ninety pound neat. I hooked him on a Saturday afternoon—and had small hopes of killing him—as I never break the Sabbath. But I am convinced that, within the hour, he came to know that he was in the hands of Christopher North—and his courage died. I gave him the but so cruelly, that in two hours he began to wallop; and at the end of three he lay dead at my feet, just as

> "The star of Jove, so beautiful and large,"

tipped the crest of Cruachan.

Shepherd. Hoo lang?

North. So beautifully proportioned, that, like that of St Peter's or St Paul's, you did not feel his mighty magnitude till after long contemplation. Then, you indeed knew that he was a sublime Fish, and could not choose but smile at the idea of any other salmon.

Tickler. Mr De Quincey, now that these two old fools have got upon angling——

Shepherd. Twa auld fules! You great, starin, Saracen-headed Langshanks! If it werena for bringin Mr North intil trouble, by ha'in a dead man fun' within his premises, deil tak me gin I wadna fractur your skull wi' ane o' the cut-crystals!

[Mr North *touches the spring, and the Bower is in darkness.*

Tickler—

> "But such a chief I spy not through the host—
> De Quincey, North, and Shepherd, all are lost
> In general darkness. Lord of earth and air!
> Oh, King! Oh, Father! hear my humble prayer:
> Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore;
> Give me to see, and Tickler asks no more.
> If I must perish—I thy will obey,
> But let me perish in the face of day!"

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw! The speech o' Awjax, in Pop's Homer.

North. Gentlemen, let us go to supper in the Lodge.

[*Omnes surgunt.*

Shepherd. What'n a sky!

North—

> "Now glow'd the firmament
> With living sapphires. Hesperus, that led
> The starry host, rode brightest—till the Moon
> Rising in clouded majesty, at length,
> Apparent Queen! unveil'd her peerless light,
> And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."

XXVI.

(NOVEMBER 1830.)

Scene,—Blue Parlour. Time,—Eight o'Clock. Present,— North, Shepherd, *and Jug.*

Shepherd. Which o' us three, I wonner, looks best at the settin in o' another wunter? I suspeck it's me—for to say naething o' the jug, wha has lost his nose, you're getting mair and mair spinnle-shankit, sir, ilka year—as for your hauns, ane may see through them—and a'thegither you're an interesting atomy o' the auld schule. I fear we're gaun to lose you, sir, during the season. But dinna mind, sir—ye sall hae a moniment erected to you by a grateful nation on the Calton Hill—and ships comin up the Firth—steamers, smacks, and ithers—amang them now and then a man-o'-war—will never notice the Parthenon, a' glowerin through telescopes at the mausoleum o' Christopher North.

North. I desire no other monument, James, than a bound set of the Magazine in the library of every subscriber. Yes—my immortal ambition is to live in the libraries and liberties of my native land.

Shepherd. A noble sentiment, sir, beautifully expressed. Oh! but you're a curious cretur—a Great Man!

North. James, I know myself. I am neither a great nor a small—but a middle-sized man——

Shepherd. What the deevil! dinna ye belang to the Sax Feet Club.[1]

North. No. The Fine Fellows invite me to their Feasts and Festivals—and I am proud to be their guest. But my stature

[1] A Society of young Scottish athletes.

is deficient the eighth part of an inch; and I could not submit to sit at any board below either the Standard or the Salt.

Shepherd. A noble sentiment, sir, beautifully expressed. Oh! but you're a curious cretur—a Great Man!

North. I am not a curious creature, James, but a commonplace Christian. As to my intellectual stature—and of that I spoke when I said that I am but a middle-sized man—it is, I am satisfied, the stature best adapted for the enjoyment of tranquil happiness in this world. I look along the many levels of life—and lo! they seem to form one immense amphitheatre. Below me are rows, and rows, and rows of well-apparelled people—remember I speak figuratively of the mind—who sometimes look up—ungrudgingly and unenvyingly—to where I am sitting,—smiling on me as on one belonging to their own order, though placed by Providence—august Master of these august Ceremonies—a little loftier in the range of seats in a half-moon circling the horizon, and crowded to overflowing with the whole human race.

Shepherd. A noble sentiment, sir, beautifully expressed. Oh! but you're a curious cretur—a Great Man.

North. I beg your pardon—but I did not hear you, James—will you repeat that again?

Shepherd. Na. I makes a pint o' never sayin the same thing twice ower for ony man—except a deaf ane—and only to him gin he uses a lug-trumpet.

North. Then looking right and left, James, I behold an immense multitude sitting, seemingly on the same altitude with myself—somewhat more richly robed than our brethren beneath—till, lifting up my eyes, lo! the Magnates, and Potentates, and Princes, and Kings of all the shadowy worlds of mind, magnificently arrayed, and belonging rather to the heavens than to the earth!

Shepherd. A noble sentiment, sir, beautifully expressed. Oh! but you're a curious cretur—a Great Man! (*Aside.*) I micht din thae words intil his lug fifty times without his catchin their meanin—for whan the auld doited body begins haverin about himsel, he's deaf to a' things else in the creawtion.

North. Monuments! Some men have been so glorious, James, that to build up something in stone to perpetuate that glory, seems of all futile attempts the most futile, and either

to betray a sinful distrust of their immortality, or a wretched ignorance of the

"Power divine of sacred memories,"

which will reign on earth, in eternal youth, ages and ages and ages after the elements have dissolved the brass or marble, on which were vainly engraven the consecrated and undying names!

Shepherd. A noble sentiment, beau———

North. A monument to Newton! a monument to Shakespeare! Look up to Heaven — look into the Human Heart. Till the planets and the passions—the affections and the fixed stars are extinguished—their names cannot die.

Shepherd (*starting up.*) A moniment to Sir William Wallace! A moniment to William Tell! Look at the mountains of Scotland and Switzerland—listen to their cataracts—look to the light on the foreheads—listen to the music on the lips of the Free—

"Kings of the Desert, men whose stately tread
Brings from the dust the sound of Liberty!" [1]

North. A noble sentiment, James, beautifully expressed. Oh! but you're a curious cretur—a Great Man!

Shepherd. What! You've been sookin in my flattery a' the time, ye auld sinner—and noo turn intil a banter on mysel the compliment I paid you frae the verra bottom o' my heart? You're a queer deevil.—Hoo hae ye stood the weather this season, sir?

North. Weather! It never deserved the name of weather, James, even during that muddy and mizzly misnomer—Summer; while the Autumn———

Shepherd. Weel, do ye ken, sir, that I never saw in a' my born days, what I could wi' a safe conscience hae ca'd—bad weather? The warst has aye had some redeemin quality about it that enabled me to thole it without yaumerin. Though we mayna be able to see, we can aye think o' the clear blue lift. Weather, sir, aiblins no to speak very scientially in the way o' meteorological observation—but rather in a poetical, that is, religious spirit—may be defined, I jalouse, "the expression o' the fluctuations and modifications o' feeling in the heart o'

[1] From Professor Wilson's Poem "On reading Mr Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade."

the heevens, made audible, and visible, and tangible on their face and bosom." That's weather.

North. Something very beautiful might be written about weather—climate.

Shepherd. But no by you—by me. Oh! heavens and earth! O God and man! what I—a shepherd—hae felt in a spring-shower! The dry warld a' at ance made dewy—dewy—dewy as the light in the Angel o' Mercy's een, beheld by contrite sinner in a midnight dream!

North. James, your paw.

Shepherd. A saft, fresh, silent change has been wrocht a' ower the outward creation—and a congenial change—as saft, as fresh, as silent, has likewise been wrocht within your ain heart. Music is maist harmonious—but not mair harmonious nor licht; for licht wears a coat o' many colours—and lo! yonder is the web from which it was cut—hung aloft in the skies.

North. There spake at once the Ettrick Shepherd and the Tailor of Yarrow-Ford!

Shepherd. The Rainbow! Is she not the Lady o' Licht, the Queen o' Colour, the Princess o' Prisms, the Heiress Apparent o' Air, and her Royal Highness of Heaven? O Thou! who bendest Beauty like a bridge across the valley—on which imagination's eye may ken celestial shapes moving to and fro alang the braided battlements—Sun-begotten, Cloud-born Angel! Emblem, sign, and symbol of mercy and of peace! Storm-seeker and storm-subduer! Pathway—so sacred Superstition sings—between Heaven and Earth! Alike beautiful is thy coming and thy going—and no soul so savage as not for a while to saften, as thy Apparition comes gradually breathing and blushing out of the sky! Immortal art thou in thy evanescence! The sole light, either in heaven or on earth, of which the soul may not sicken when overcome with the agonies of grief or guilt! O that on my death-bed I may behold a Rainbow!

North. Nay, James, the jug is empty; and at that moment, with the sudden jerk of your arm, expecting a heavier load on the way to your mouth, you had nearly given yourself a bloody nose. Be more cautious in future—but replenish.

Shepherd. In a single instant, a' the earth is green as emerald, and covered wi' a glorious glitter o' its ain, sic as never shone—or could shine, over the bricht but barren sea. A's

joy: The knowes, the banks, the braes, the lawns, the hedges, the woods, the single trees, the saughs,[1] the heather, the broom, the bit bushes, the whins, the fern, the gerse, the flowers, the weeds—sic as dockens, nettles, ay, the verra hemlock—are a' harmless and a' happy! They seem a' imbued wi' a sort o' strange serene spirit o' life, and nought in a' creawtion seems—dead!

North. Life-imbued by a poet's soul!

Shepherd. Then look at the animal creturs. Isna that a bonny bit beastie, cavin its large-ee'd gracefu' head in the air, frae the elastic turf liftin up and lettin doun again its lang thin legs sae elegantly, its tail a' the while a perfeck streamer —in many a winding ring it gallops round its dam—and then, half frolicsome, half afraid, returns rapidly to her side, and keeps gazing on the stranger. Some day or ither that bit silly foal wull be wunnin a king's plate or a gold cup; for you see the Aurab bluid in his fine fetlocks, and ere long that neck, like his sire's, will be clothed with thunder.

North. You must ride him yourself, James, next year at Musselburgh.

Shepherd. Fling your crutch, sir, intil a rose-bush, till a' the blossoms flee intil separate leaves, and a' the leaves gang careerin in air outower the lea, and that would be an eemage o' the sudden flicht o' a heap o' snaw-white lambs, a' broken up in a moment as they lay amang the sunshine, and scattered far and wide o'er the greensward—sune to be regathered on the Starting-Knoll; but there the eemage wunna haud, for rose-leaves ance dissipated dee like love-kisses lavished in dreams.

North. Rose-leaves and rose-lips—lambs and lasses—and love-kisses lavished in dreams! And all these images suggested in a shepherd's recollection of a Spring-Shower! Prevailing pastoral Poet, complete thy picture.

Shepherd. See how the trouties are loupin in the pools—for a shower o' insecks hae come winnowing their way on the wings o' the western wind, frae the weel-watered wavings o' Elibank's whisperin woods.[2]

North. No such imitative melodies in Homer! The sentence is like a sugh.

Shepherd. 'Twas nae faut o' mine, sir, for ma mouth got

[1] *Saugh*—willow. [2] On the Tweed near Ashiestiel.

fou o' double-Ws—and I had to whiff and whustle them out. But hush and list, sir—list and hush! For that finest, faintest, amaist evanescent music—merry, or mournful, just as ye may be disposed to think and feel it—but now it is merry—dear me! it's clean gane—there—there it is heard again—like the dying tone o' the sma'est chord o' the harp o' an angel happy in the heart o' the highest heavens—and what may it be—since our ears are too dull to hear seraphic string or strain—but the hymn, to us amaist hushed by the altitude—although still pourin and pourin out like a torrent—o' the lyrical Laverock, wha, at the first patterin o' the spring-shower upon the braird about his nest, had shot, wi' short, fast-repeated soarings, a-singing up the sky, as if in the delirium o' his delicht he would hae forsaken the earth for ever—but wha, noo that he has reached at last the pinnacle o' his aerial ambition, wull sune be heard descendin, as if he were naething but a sang—and then seem a musical speck in the sky—till again ring a' the lower regions wi' his still loud, but far tenderer strains—for soarin he pours, but sinkin he breathes his voice, till it ceases suddenly in a flutter and a murmur ower the head o' his brooding mate—lifted lovingly up wi' its large saft een to welcome her lover-husband to their blessed nest!

North. My dear James, you have illustrated your definition of weather by an exquisite example——

Shepherd. But I'm no half dune yet——

North. For the present, if you please, James.

Shepherd. But I dinna please—and I insist on being alloo'd to feenish my Spring-Shower.

North. Well, if it must be so—first tell me what you meant by averring that there is no such thing in nature as bad weather. I am rather disposed to believe that—whatever may have been the case once—now there is no such thing as good. Why, James, you might as well seek to prove by a definition that there is no such thing in nature as an ugly woman.

Shepherd. Neither there is, sir. There are different degrees o' beauty, Mr North, frae the face that outshines that o' an angel's seen in a dream—doun—doun—doun—ever sae mony hunder thousan' degrees doun, till you meet that o' the tinkler-randy, whase looks gar you ratherly incline to the ither side o' the road—but nae ugliness. Sometimes I've kent mysel likely to fa' intil a sair mistak — na, a sair fricht — by

stumblin a' at ance on a lassie geyan far doun in the degrees, and wha really did seem at first sicht unco fearsome;—but then, sir, the mistak arose frae the suddenness, and frae considerin the face o' her by its ain individual sel, and no as ane o' many on the mysterious scale o' beauty. But then a man o' ony powers o' memory and reflection, and ony experience amang the better half o' creation, soon corrects that error; and finds, afore he has walked hardly a mile alangside o' the hizzie, that she's verra weel-faured, and has an expression, mair especially about the een and mouth——

North. James! James!

Shepherd. The truth is, Mr North, that you and the likes o' you, that hae been cavied[1] a' your days in toons, like poutry, hae seldom seen ony real weather—and ken but the twa distinctions o' wat and dry. Then, the instant it begins to drap, up wi' the umbrella — and then vanishes the sky. Why, that's often the verra best time to feel and understaun' the blessed union o' earth and heaven, when the beauty is indeed sae beauteous, that in the perfect joy o' the heart that beats within you, ye wad lauch in an atheist's face, and hae nae mair dout o' the immortality o' the sowl, than o' the mountain-tap that, far up above the vapours, is waiting in its majestic serenity for the reappearance o' the Sun, seen brichtenin and brichtenin himsel during the shower, through behind a cloud that every moment seems mair and mair composed o' radiance, till it has melted quite away, — and then, there indeed is the Sun, rejoicing like a giant to run a race——

North. A race against time, James, which will terminate in a dead heat on the Last Day.

Shepherd. Time will be beat to a stand-still.

North. And the Sun at the Judge's stand swerve from the course into chaos.

Shepherd. That's queer talk—though no withouten a wild dash o' the shooblime. But how do you account, sir, for the number o' mad dowgs this summer? And what's your belief about the Hoedrofoby?

North. I have for many years, James, myself, laboured under a confirmed hydrophobia——

Shepherd. Tuts, nae nonsense—I want to hear you speak seriously on canine madness.

[1] *Cavied*—cooped up.

North. Dogs, James, are subject to some strange and severe disease which is popularly called madness; and the question is, can they inoculate the human body with that disease by their bite? Perhaps they can—and I confess I should not much like to try the experiment. But an acute writer in the *Westminster Review* has declared his conviction that the disease called hydrophobia in the dog has nothing to do with the disease of the same name in the human species—and I am strongly disposed to agree with him——

Shepherd. What? Believe in a pairodowgs[1] o' that outrageous natur?

North. Yes, James, to use his own words, that the madness of the biter has no effect on the madness of the bitten, and that a man who has been bitten by a dog in perfect health, is just as likely to have all the symptoms of the hydrophobia as if he had been bitten by a mad one.

Shepherd. A perfeck pairodowgs, sir—a perfeck pairodowgs!

North. He gives his reasons, James, and they are not easily set aside.

Shepherd. Let's hear them, sir.

North. He observes, in the first place,—if I remember rightly—and if I forget his words, I have his meaning—that the effects of all poisons, which we are acquainted with, are certain and determinate. Do you grant that, James?

Shepherd. Be it sae.

North. For example—suppose a thousand persons swallow each the same quantity of arsenic—sufficient to cause death—they either all die, or are all similarly affected, or nearly so, by the poison. No person can use arsenic in his tea instead of sugar—empty half-a-dozen of cups at breakfast, and that evening enjoy the wit and humour of a Noctes Ambrosianæ.

Shepherd. Hardly.

North. But many persons, hundreds, have been bitten by mad dogs, and well bitten too, who have not been one whit the worse.

Shepherd. But then they have swallowed anecdotes.

North. Which is more than I have been able to do in such cases. But it is admitted on all hands, James, that there are no such antidotes. Can we believe, then, that the saliva of

[1] Paradox.

the rabid animal possesses the virulent property which occasions hydrophobia, when we know that so many persons have been inoculated with it without incurring the disease?

Shepherd. That's geyan puzzlin!

North. Secondly, my ingenious friend in the *Westminster* observes, that even on those who have been supposed to have been affected by this saliva, the time at which the symptoms appear is altogether indeterminate—contrary to all that we know of the action of poisons. Why — it is believed that it may be injected into a wound, and lie there harmless for months, nay years—till all at once it breaks out, and you are more insane than Sirius. A strange sort of saliva indeed this — so capricious and whimsical in its action—whereas all other poisons may be depended on, and do their work subject to certain general regular and acknowledged laws. What say you to all this, James?

Shepherd. Never having received a regular medical education, sir, I'm dumbfoundered, and haena a word to throw to a dowg. But are a' thae fearsome accounts o' the heedro naething but lees?

North. Many of them most miserably true. But my friend believes that the horrid malady originates in the nature and shape of the wound, and not from any virulent matter injected into it; a nerve has been injured, and tetanus sometimes ensues — direful spasmodic affections terminating in death. Any deeply-punctured wound may produce the disease called hydrophobia in man.

Shepherd. Ae conclusion to be drawn frae the whole seems to be, that dowgs are mair dangerous animals than is usually suspected, since a dowg that bites you when he's in his perfect senses, is just as likely to gie ye the foby as when he snaps at ye in the hicht o' his delirium in tongue-lolling madness.

North. Accidents will happen—but no very great number of people are bitten by dogs in their perfect senses; and it is only some wounds that occasion tetanus by injuring a nerve. This is certain, that in some of the few authenticated cases of the disease called hydrophobia in man, occasioned by the bite of a dog, there was not the least reason in the world for supposing the dog to have been what is called mad.—But fill your glass, James, to the memory of Bronte.

[*It is drunk in solemn silence.*

Shepherd. Let us hae about half-an-hour's talk o' politics—and then hae dune wi' them for the rest o' the nicht. What o' France?

North. James, all men who had visited France with their eyes and ears open since the accession of Charles—now ex-King—knew that a struggle was going on—only to cease with the overthrow of one of the parties—between the Royalists and the Liberals. Each party strove to change the charter given by Louis XVIII. into so many dead letters. But the Liberals—as they are called—were from the beginning far more unprincipled than the Royalists were even at the end; and had Charles and Polignac not acted as they did, in the matter of the ordonnances,[1] the monarchy had been virtually destroyed by their enemies.

Shepherd. Do you really say sae, sir.

North. Two courses were open to Charles—to abdicate the throne rather than sit there a shadow—or to support the ordonnances by the sword. That would not have been easy, but it would have been possible; and had Charles been the tenth part a Napoleon, it would have been done—and his enemies having been overawed by the army, the streets of Paris had not been stained with one drop of blood.

Shepherd. Oh! but he was a weak man!

[1] "The famous ordonnances, which were the immediate cause of the overthrow of the Crown, and the ruin of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon, were six in number, but the three first only were of material importance. The first suspended the liberty of the periodical press, and prohibited the publication but of such journals as were authorised by Government. The license was to be in force only for three months, and might be recalled at any time. It applied to all pamphlets below twenty leaves. The second dissolved the new Chamber, on the allegation of the arts which had been used to deceive the electors as to the real intentions of the Government. The third, on the preamble of the necessity of reforming the Electoral Law according to the principles of the constitution, and to remedy the evils which experience had brought to light, and of the powers applicable to such cases vested in the King by the 14th article of the Charter, reduced the number of deputies to 258, being the number fixed by the 36th article of the Charter: the colleges of departments were to elect an equal number of representatives with those of arrondissements; and the electoral franchise was reduced to the possession of property paying the requisite amount of direct taxes by the exclusion of the suffrage founded on patents; the duration of the Chamber of Deputies was fixed at five years; and the colleges of departments, composed of the fourth of the electors paying the highest amount of direct taxes, were to choose at least a half in the general list of candidates proposed for the colleges of arrondissements. The prefects were re-invested with all the powers with which they had been invested

North. I do not know that he is a weak man, James; but on this emergency — this crisis of his fate — he reckoned without his host—and thence his second visit to Holyrood.

Shepherd. I will ca' on him neist time I come to Embro'; and if he's no at hame, leave my caird.

North. Liberty, my dear Shepherd, is like the air we breathe—if we have it not, we die. You have heard these words before—and you and I have felt their meaning on the mountain-top. Slavery is a living death.

Shepherd. That's a bull——

North. But of all slaveries the worst is that which, dancing in chains, supposes itself Freedom.

Shepherd. But didna ye admire, sir, the behaviour o' the Mob o' Paris?

North. An old man like me, James, is chary of his admiration. In my youth—some forty years ago—I was too prodigal of it—and the sun I worshipped set in a shower of blood. The French—with many and great defects—are a gallant—a noble people; but the mob that fought—and they fought well—though victorious over but feeble opposition—during what I leave others to call the Three *Glorious* Days—were not the French People—and I should be ashamed of

prior to the act of 1828. Neither the intervention of third parties, nor an appeal to the ordinary courts of law, were permitted to interfere with the prefects in the preparation of the electoral lists. . . . . .

"It has been already stated that the Polignac Cabinet acted most unwisely in making themselves even the aggressors on the public liberties, and still more imprudently in doing so with but inadequate preparations for a contest. But if the question be put, whether the ordonnances were absolutely illegal, and justified the resistance they experienced? a very different opinion must be formed. According to our ideas in England, where any invasion of established law, except by the act of the three branches of the legislature, is illegal, they unquestionably were a breach of the constitution. But that was *not* the constitution of France, either according to the letter of the Charter or the interpretation put upon it by the united voice of the whole Liberal party in France. The 14th article of that deed expressly recognised an overruling power to alter the constitution as residing in the sovereign, to be exercised when the safety of the state imperatively required it. Thenceforward it was only a question of circumstances whether the existing state of affairs called for or warranted the exercise of that dictatorial power; and it had repeatedly been exercised, under circumstances less critical than those in which Charles X. was at last placed, not only without any opposition from, but with the cordial and loud approbation of, the whole Liberal party in France."—ALISON'S *Europe*, 1815–1852, vol. iii., pp. 503, 585.

myself were I to waste any of my enthusiasm on such actors, prepared long beforehand to play their parts—yet, after all, little better than puppets—though the machinery worked well —and was triumphant.

Shepherd. I thocht you wadna attend the Meeting.[1]

North. Had I been a republican, I would; and have declared my delight and exultation at the downfall of a great and ancient monarchy. Probably I should have thought it a despotism, and would have sung odes and hymns of thanksgiving when all its towers and temples toppled into dust. Some such men, I believe, were at the meeting here—and believing them to be conscientious and consistent, they have my respect.

Shepherd. And mine too—and I howp they'll be proud o't.

North. Other men, again, were at the meeting, James, who love what they call a limited monarchy — and limited the French Monarchy is now to their hearts' content! Till Louis Philippe began to reign (to reign!) eyes never saw a cipher.

Shepherd. I hae mair power in the Forest—under the young Dyuck, I verily believe — though I'm no his grieve — than the son of Egalité now has in Paris, under old Lafayette and that sweet innocent invention for preserving freedom, the National Guard.

North. Good, James. They therefore lifted up their voices on high—like sounding harp and tinkling cymbal, and were applauded to the echo.

Shepherd. Sae far a' seems to hae been richt. Then what hae you to compleen o', sir?

North. I complain of nothing—not I, James—I have left my gout at John-o'-Groat's House—and my complacency and peace of mind are perfect. But oh! the superasinine stupidity of all those sumphs and sumphesses—those Jack and Jeanie donkeys —each row above row, rising up with ears of still-increasing longitude, till those at the acme swept the spiders from the cornice, and crushed the undevoured flies asleep on the ceiling.

Shepherd. Haw! Haw! Haw! Haw! Haw!—What do you mean?

[1] A meeting held in the Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh, to celebrate the French Revolution of 1830.

North. Tories leaning on the bosom of Whigs, and encircled in the arms of Radicals! Church-and-King men shouting their praises of altar-pullers-down, and throne-shatterers, and of all the fierce and ferocious foes of Old Establishments, with mattock and pickaxe razing them all from their very foundations, and howling in each cloud of dust that went darkening up the heavens!

Shepherd. Puir infatuated fules! I'm ower angry to pity them—nor ought leal men and true to accept now the peace-offering o' their humiliation and their shame.

North. People there are, as you well know, James, who never can move one single step, either backwards or forwards, unless led by a finger and a thumb, gently or rudely pinching their nose. No will of their own have they—for will and reason go together—and only the intelligent are free. More abject slaves never trooped together in a gang before the whip of the overseer to the sugar-canes, than those slaves of both sexes, that sat in our Assembly Rooms, in chains flung over them by masters who despised them too thoroughly to honour them with any portion of their hatred, shouting and bellowing at the prospect of dominion and empire about to be given to them who would trample them into dust.

Shepherd. Oh! the ninnies!

North. Why — not even though the mob of the Faubourg St Antoine had, as if by some seeming miracle, performed their parts like angels—angels of blood at best—and thereby set at defiance all our knowledge, all experience, all history of human mobs, which the Liberty-and-Equality-men, and the old and young Anarchists, have the audacity to ask us to believe—ought they who swear by the British Constitution to have uttered one word in eulogy of the "Three Glorious Days," till they knew something more of what was likely to be the upshot of it all—if indeed ignorance could be supposed so dense as to be impenetrable to the lurid lights already gleaming all round the horizon—

> "With fear of change
> Perplexing monarchs!"

Shepherd. What'n a face! Dinna fa' intil a fit. Tak a swig. Na — I didna tell you to drink out o' the green bottle —that's spirits—but to kiss the jug. If you speak that way

noo that you're sober—mercy on us, what a fury when you get fou!

North. Some there were — many — and certainly not the least silly of the set—who held that a demand was made upon their admiration, simply by the bravery and moderation of the Parisian mob — which demand they were bound to answer — without any reference whatever to the past or the future—and even were the Revolution afterwards to turn out the greatest of all evils. They pledged themselves, they said, to no political opinion on the subject—and begged that to be understood clearly by both sides of the whole world. But nothing should prevent them from giving vent to their admiration. No doubt, James, if their admiration were of the nature of a wind-colic, they were right in giving vent to it—time and place duly considered—though roses and lilies forbid that I should have been there to hear! But admiration is not a vice of the stomach, bowels, and intestines, but a virtue of the heart and brain; and so far from seeking to evaporate itself in noisy explosions, it loves to breathe in long-continued and silent incense over the whole actions of a man's life. A stronger proof of a weak mind cannot be exhibited than an impatient, restless, and feverish anxiety to hail every coming or new-come event, action, or character that seems to be good, with instant applause. In private life they, whose admiration is perpetually bursting out, are always the most frivolous; the shallow rills of their sympathy soon run dry; and when you talk to them a few weeks—say a few days—even a few hours after the unmeasured expression of their enthusiasm, of the cause which excited it, they look at you with a face of blank forgetfulness of all their former feelings, and you discover that they are occupied with some new favourite event or incident, which in its turn is forgotten before next day's dinner.

Shepherd. Hoo that used to be the case wi' Sir Walter's Novelles! Strang minds read them with deep delight—said some sentences to that effect when the talk gaed roun' the table, and were silent; but they retained all the glorious things impressed unobliterably (that's a kittle word to pronounce) on the tablets o' their memories—that is, their understandings—that is, their hearts—that is, their sowls—for they are a' ane in the lang-run, and o' a composite character. But bits o' triflin laddies and lassies, and auld women o' baith

sexes, used to keep chatterin and jabberin about each new novelle as it came out, just as if it never had a predecessor, and was never to hae a successor—as if it had been the only byuck in prent—when lo and behold! in less than sax months, out came anither in fowre volumns, and then they clean forgot that the ane they had sae lang bothered you about, till you wished yoursel dead, had ever been in the press!

North. An apt illustration, James. The shallow persons of whom I was speaking had not the small sense to see that it was in the nature of things utterly impossible to pronounce an isolated panegyric on the personal conduct of the actors in a political revolution, that should not include approbation of much, if not all, involved in that revolution. And even for a moment granting that such an isolated panegyric could have been pronounced, they had not the still smaller sense to see that all the opposite party would insist on either dragging them in among their ranks—though, heaven knows! they would be no acquisition to any party,—or on representing them thenceforth as lukewarm or milk-and-water adherents to their own,—or more probably—say certainly—talking of them in all companies as noodles, and incapable, from sheer ignorance and folly, of forming any opinion at all on political questions of any pith or moment.

Shepherd. You hae treated the subject, sir, wi' your usual masterly discrimination. It's easy noo, on lookin back at the newspapers, to ken the kind o' cattle that ca'd thae meetings.

North. Two or three eminent, and some half-dozen able men attended the meeting here (which was got up by my friend John Bowring!) but otherwise it was a poor affair, and forgotten sooner than an ineffectual fancy ball. In England such meetings were all of one character. No distinguished or conscientious man of our side, James, attended them,—and even the great Whig leaders stood aloof,—nay, the bulk of the Whig gentlemen. True it is, as is said in the last number of the *Quarterly Review*, — an admirable one, — that "the meetings and dinners, and subscriptions, set on foot by our old-established disturbers of the public peace, have been countenanced by hardly one person which any human being will dare to call respectable."

Shepherd. Why, as to that, sir, there's nae sayin what some human beings will daur to ca' respectable; and for my ain

pairt, I am no just prepared to gang the length o' that apothegm. I fear not a few respectable people have shown ower muckle favour to this new French revolution,—and you and me—wise as we are, and wise as the world thinks us—maunna exclude frae the ranks o' respectability a' folk that are sae unfortunate as no to be o' our way o' thinkin.

North. I sit corrected, my dear James. I am no bigot.

Shepherd. Arena ye?

North. Sir Walter's appeal to the people of Edinburgh, in behalf of the "grey discrowned head" of the old ex-King was like himself, generous and gentlemanly; but methinks he must have but a poor opinion of "mine own romantic town," else had he never doubted that they would sympathise with Fallen Royalty seeking an asylum in Holyrood. Sir Walter reminds us that the highest authority "pronounced us to be a nation of gentlemen!" Let us then behave towards him who was once Charles the Tenth of France, in a way worthy the character bestowed on us by him who was once George the Fourth of England.

Shepherd. Is that his argument? 'Tis but a puir ane.

North. But so so—no great shakes. But I say, James, that we are not, never were, and I hope never will be, a nation of Gentlemen. And you will allow, whatever Sir Walter may do, that I am a higher than "the highest authority" on the character of our countrymen, and that here, George Guelph must yield to Christopher North.

Shepherd. Oh! ye radical!

North. George the Fourth—heaven rest his soul!—was the "First Gentleman in Europe," nor do I know who is his successor, whether king or subject, commoner or peer. But——

Shepherd. I can understaun' a man's being the First Fiddle in Europe, but not the First Gentleman; for equality seems to me—but to be sure I'm but a puir silly shepherd—to be necessarily involved somehow or ither in our idea o' a Gentleman,—whereas a' competition in accomplishments and manners is out o' the question between subject and king. It might aiblins be mair correct to say that he was the First Gentleman amang the Kings o' Europe.

North. Excellent, James; George the Fourth saw little either of Scotland or Scotchmen; William the Fourth, I hope, will

see more; and as he, thank God, is not the First Gentleman in Europe—very far from it indeed, but I hope something many million times better, a Patriot King—he will be delighted to find that so far from being a Nation of Gentlemen, we are, take us on the whole, and on working week-days, for in our Sunday's best we do look very genteel, about as coarse, clownish, commonplace, vulgar, and raw-boned a nation as ever in loyalty encompassed, as with a wall of brass, iron, and fire, a hereditary throne.

Shepherd. Auld Charlie 'ill be treated wi' pity and respeck —nae fear o' that—as lang's he sojourns amang us in Holyrood. There's something sacred in a' sorts o' sorrow—be it o' the great or the sma'—but imagination, unrebuked either by reason or the heart, is mair profundly stooned[1] by the misfortunes o' those who have fallen frae a high estate; and och! what nasty politics that could abuse Pity for openin the door o' a Sanctuary, let his errors hae been what they may, to a fugitive and a suppliant King!

North. It was in the exaltation of victory, and indignation at crime, that the Editor of the *Sun* newspaper, for example, James—a scholar and a gentleman—used language too, too strong respecting the punishment due to Charles on his fall. A friend of ours rebuked him in Maga; but who always speaks wisely? Surely not I, any more than that worthy Editor; and I doubt not that when he hears that the old man is again in Holyrood, he will feel that, without any compromise of principle, he may say, "Peace be with him in his retreat!"

Shepherd. And what wad ye think o' askin him and his suit some nicht to a Noctes Ambrosianæ? I'm perfeckly serious in sayin that we maun ask him; and I'm as perfeckly serious in saying that I'm sure that he'll come. Why no him as weel as——

North. Silence, James, silence—the time has not yet come for divulging that secret.

Shepherd. ——Why no him as weel as his LATE MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY GEORGE THE FOURTH?

North (*starting up*). Gurney, expunge!

Shepherd (*starting up*). Gurney, restore! O North, I think I see him pechin incog. up the brae o' Gabriel's Road, atween the oxters o' us twa—Tickler acting as guide and pioneer—

[1] *Stooned*—pained.

wi' that wee shauchly body the Marquis o' Winchester, and that great big muckle John Bull, Sir William Curtis—and a bit anonymous cretur belonging to the nobility in the rear—a' sax o' us, such was the royal pleasure, in kilts—and hoo Awmrose took us for a deputation o' the Celtic Society, and persisted, a' the nicht through, in ca'in the King, Francis Maximus Macnab, him that wrote *The Universe!*[1] O but it was a gran' ploy![2] and may we soon see sic anither in the Saloon!

North. Well, well, James—let your daft nonsense go forth to the world. Nobody will credit it.

Shepherd. Mony a lee-lookin tale's true, howsomever, and that amang the number. But let's change the subject.—When think ye, sir, is Mr Muir's second volumm o' Lord Byron's Life comin out? You maun review it in a splendid style. What for didna ye notice the first volumm?

North. What the devil do you mean, you Incubus? Did I not write two articles on it, each thirty pages long,[3]—full of the——

Shepherd. If I read them at the time, I hae clean forgotten them,—ane seldom remembers what he reads in a maggazin.

North. If he does not, then one seldom remembers what he reads anywhere else, James. True, that the wit and wisdom of one month succeeding the wit and wisdom of another in endless succession, mankind must often forget when and where, and from what source, they have derived such infinite amusement and instruction. But the amusement and instruction themselves do not perish on that account, but go into a million treasuries. People are manifestly growing wiser and better every day; and I humbly confess that I think myself one of the great instruments in the hands of Providence, of the amelioration of the human race. I am not dead to the voice of fame,—but believe me that my chief, if not sole object in writing for Maga, is the diffusion of knowledge, virtue, and happiness all over the world. What is it to me if the names of my articles are often forgotten, not by a thankless but a restless generation, too much agog after novelties, and too much enamoured of change? The contents of any one of my good

[1] Francis Maximus Macnab was the author of an insane production entitled *The Theory of the Universe.*

[2] Ploy—a harmless frolic, properly of a social kind.

[3] In *Blackwood's Magazine,* Nos. CLXIII., CLXIV.

articles cannot possibly be forgotten by all the thousands who have told me that they once delighted in them,—some fair or bright image—some tender or pure feeling—some high or solemn thought must survive,—and enough for me, James—if in hours of gay or serious memories, some mirthful or melancholy emanation from my mind be restored to being, even though the dreamer knows not that it was mine,—but believes it to have arisen then for the first time in his own imagination. Did I choose to write books, I believe they would find readers. But a book is a formal concern,—and to read it one must shut himself up for hours from society, and sit down to what may indeed be a pleasant task,—but still it is a task,—and in the most interesting volume that ever was written, alas! there are many yawns. But a good article—such as many of mine that shall be nameless—may be read from beginning to end under the alternate influence of smiles and tears;—and what if it be laid aside, and perhaps never meets more the fair face that bedewed or illumined it?—yet methinks, James, that the maiden who walks along the spring braes is the better and the happier of the sights, scents, and sounds she enjoys there, though in a month she remembers not the primrose-bank, on which, cheered by the skylark's song, she sat and smiled to see her long dishevelled tresses reflected in the Fairy's Pool.

Shepherd. That's no unbonny.

North. I believe that all my words are not wasted, each succeeding month, on the idle air. Some simple melodies, at least, if no solemn harmonies, are sometimes heard, mayhap from my lyre, floating along the lonely valleys, and the cheerful villages, and even not undistinguishable amid the din of towns and cities. What if, once heard, they are heard no more? They may have touched a string, a chord, James, in some innocent, simple, but not unthoughtful heart; and that string, that chord, James, as well thou knowest, for thou art one of nature's own poets,—I but a proser—and an old grey-haired proser too,—may thenceforth of itself "warble melody," while, if untouched by me or you, or other lovers of their kind, it might have lain mute for ever! If so, verily I have had my reward.

Shepherd. What for do you never try to write verses, sir? Ca' and they'll come.

North. An old poet is an old fool, James.

Shepherd. But then you see, sir, you're sic a fule already in sae mony things, that the world 'ill no think ae grain the waur o' you gin you'll play the fule in that too. Be a poet, sir, and fling yoursel for food to the hungry critics, for they're in a state o' starvation, and, for want o' something to devoor, wull sune a' dee o' hunger and thrust.

North. There, James, is an exceedingly graceful, elegant, and pathetic little poem, "The Arrow and the Rose."

Shepherd. What is't about, and wha's the Owther?

North. Mr William Kennedy,[1] and the subject is the story of the loves of Henry of Navarre, when Prince of Béarn, and Fleurette, the gardener's daughter—a story traditional in Gascony, and preserved by M. de Jouy.

Shepherd. Wi' your leave, I'll put it in my pouch.

North. "The Captive of Fez," James, is a powerful performance. The versification often reminds one of Dryden and Byron—strong passion pervades the tale—and the descriptions of scenery are at once poetical and picturesque. But I must review it one of these days—and a few magnificent extracts will show that Mr Aird[2] is a man of true genius.

Shepherd. He is that, sir—and I ken few men that impresses you in conversation wi' a higher opinion o' their powers than Mr Aird. Sometimes I hae considerable diffeeculty in follow in him—for he taks awfu' loups frae premise to conclusion, clearin chasms dizzy to look doun on—and aften annunces as self-evident truths, positions that appear to me unco problematical. But he does, at times, flash fine fancies, half out o' his lips, and half out o' his een; and afore I kent he wrote verses, I saw he was a poet.

North. He's a man of strong intellect and strong imagination—and his mind dwells in a lofty sphere.

Shepherd. Hae you read Byron's Life o' Galt,[3] sir?

North.—I have, James. His lordship used John somewhat scurvily—on one or two occasions—but our friend pays

[1] Some time private secretary to the Earl of Durham in Canada, and afterwards British Consul for Texas, of which State he wrote an account.

[2] Editor of the *Dumfries Herald,* and author of *Religious Characteristics,* also of a Memoir of D. M. Moir. His Poetical Works were published by Messrs Blackwood in 1848.

[3] A misnomer (not unapt) for *Galt's Life of Byron.* John Galt, author of *The Annals of the Parish, The Ayrshire Legatees, The Entail,* &c., was born in 1779, and died in 1839.

him back in his own coin—and we thus have a couple of rather forbidding portraits.

Shepherd. Disagreeable likenesses—eh?

North. Mr Galt is a man of genius, and some of his happiest productions will live in the literature of his country. His humour is rich, rare, and racy, and peculiar withal, entitling him to the character of originality—a charm that never fadeth away; he has great power in the humble, the homely pathetic, and he is conversant, not only with many modes and manners of life, but with much of its hidden and more mysterious spirit.

Shepherd. He's aften unco coorse.

North. True, James, he is not so uniformly delicate and refined as you are in your prose compositions; but lend me your ear, my beloved Shepherd—despise to degrade yourself, even for one moment, by seeming to join the whelps who have been lately snarling at his heels. Let the best of the puppy pack produce anything half as good as the worst of his Tales—and then we shall listen to their barking with less disgust.

Shepherd. Wha do you mean, sir?

North. Our inferior periodical literature is much infested by a set of pert puppies, conceited curs, and heavy hounds, on whose hides and hurdies, James, it might not be amiss to try the application of whip-cord. We know how they snarl,—suppose they should be made to let us hear how they howl?

Shepherd. Tak care, sir, they dinna bite you, and gie you the tetanus.

North. They are a set of mangy mongrels, James, and fit but to be flung into some old tan-pit. Their disease originates in the spleen, and in the gall-bladder. In other words, the envy of impotence consumes them, like a cancer in the stomach, or a liver-complaint. Their lean, lank, leathern jaws soon become of a loathsome and leprous yellow—they suffer hideously from the mumps, and the yaws, and the gum-scurvy,—these, and several other kindred complaints, being all comprehended under the generic name of—the Criticals.

Shepherd. They maun be a bonny and a happy set!

North. To leave off metaphor—I must say, James, that these gentry have given me, lately, great disgust.

Shepherd. They are beneath your notice, sir. Scorn to kill them, and leave them to die a natural death.

North. The whole pack, as I said, are now yelping at the heels of Mr Galt. The small, insignificant, snotty-nosed, tick-bitten, blear-eyed beagles, were the game they are pursuing so eagerly to turn round upon them, would flee like a frightened flock of sheep.

Shepherd. I agree with you, sir, Galt's genius is great.

North. But, for the life of me, I cannot see the drift of his *Life of Byron.* I have read it through, James—and the volume, which is far from being a dull one, throws much more light on the personal character of Mr Galt himself than on that of the Noble Childe. Somehow or other, I felt all along, sometimes a painful—sometimes a pleasant inclination to laughter at the *bonhomie* of the author of the *Annals of the Parish.* It seems never for one moment to have occurred to him that he was in all things—mind, manner, body, and estate—immeasurably inferior to the mighty creature of whom he keeps scribbling away, sometimes with an approving smirk on his countenance, and sometimes with a condemning scowl—both alike ludicrous in a man so little distinguished either by moral or intellectual majesty as Mr Galt.

Shepherd. You see, sir, Byron was a Lord, and our freen Galt only a supercargo, a step below a skipper,—and low-born and low-bred folk, especially in the mercantile line, are, for the maist pairt, unco upsetting when they chance, by ony accident, to forgather wi' nobility. It's no the case wi' me, for I was born, thank God, in the Forest, and was familiar frae my youth up wi' the faces o' three successive Dyucks. But our freen Galt, when he first fand himsel in the same ship[1] wi' a Lord, maun either hae swarfed wi' fear, or keepit himsel frae swarfin by pure impidence—and wha can blame him for ha'in adopted the latter expedient? Yet, tak my word for't, sir, he was no sae impident in the packet-ship as in the pocket-volumm, and writes about Byron in a very different style, now that he is dead, than he ever daured till speak to him then when he was leevin, wi' that patrician scowl on his brow, that patrician curl on his lip, before which John Galt must have quailed, as bolder men did, to say naething o' that transcendent genius which must have laid its commands on him, to be silent if not servile, just as a king does to his subjects—I will not say a master to his slaves.

[1] In 1809 Galt sailed in the same packet-ship with Lord Byron from Gibraltar to Malta.

North. Perhaps, James, you are stating the case somewhat too strongly; yet, as Byron's rank no doubt protected him, when living, from the possibility of any impertinence from Mr Galt, it, if nothing else, should have been his safeguard also in the grave. People in the humble condition of Mr Galt,—and when he first met Lord Byron, it was most humble, —are not, by the rules of society, permitted to approach nobility but in a deferential attitude, and within what is called a respectful distance. This is so universally understood, that no man of proper spirit ever dreams of becoming very familiar with "lords, and dukes, and mighty earls," without possessing some peculiar privilege or title to do so, such as at that time does not seem to have belonged to our ingenious west-countryman. Now—he is Somebody—for his genius has distinguished him above the common herd; and genius in Britain, if it does not level all distinctions, elevates its possessor in the scale of society, and justifies cordial acquaintanceship, though it rarely fosters brotherly friendship, between a lout and a lord. But then—he was Nobody—or rather less than nobody; for it appears, from his own statement, that he had no profession—and therefore, James, you are mistaken in supposing him to have been a supercargo; —he had not been so fortunate as to receive a classical education, a want which, in Byron's eyes, must have seemed almost incompatible with the condition, if not the character, of a gentleman;—he possessed no personal accomplishments peculiarly calculated to win the regard of Childe Harold; but was, in short, merely a passenger in the same packet. Under such circumstances, the courtesy and affability with which Lord Byron seems to have behaved to Mr Galt, showed the native kindness and goodness of his heart; and we are sorry now to know, that the condescension of the illustrious peer, so far from being properly appreciated by the obscure commoner——

Shepherd. Hoo?

North. Mr Galt, in recording the slight incidents that accompanied the formation of their acquaintanceship, does not scruple, after the lapse of so many years, to speak haughtily of Byron's haughtiness, and of his unbecoming aristocratical airs in issuing orders about his luggage!

Shepherd. I'se warrant that John himsel was far fiercer and fussier about his ain leather trunks and deal chests than his

lordship, and far mair domineerin ower his inferiors, if any such there were on board o' the Gibraltar Packet.

North. No doubt. For Mr Galt tells us that he was very hypochondriacal, and seems to say that he was voyaging for no other purpose than to raise his spirits. Well for him that he could afford to do so—but whatever might have been the tone of his temper then, it says little in favour of it now, that he should have given such a colour to the trifling infirmities or caprices of temper exhibited, as he says, by an illustrious young nobleman, at the very time he was receiving from him the most amiable condescensions.

Shepherd. Was Galt, think ye, ever very intimate wi' Byron?

North. Never. Still he saw something of him; and it might not have been much amiss to tell us what were his impressions. But—James—it was his sacred duty, before doing so, to sift his own soul, and see that no mean or paltry feeling or motive was lurking there—that he was not wincing under the wound of mortified vanity——

Shepherd. Ay, sir, there's the rub. Vanity o' vanities! A' is vanity!

North. It seems that his lordship occasionally, in his letters, laughed at Mr Galt; and that, on one occasion, he expressed himself somewhat contemptuously of our friend's literary achievements. One or two harmless gibes of this kind appear in Moore's *Life of Byron;* and, though far from bitter, they seem to have enfixed themselves, "inextricable as the gored lion's bite." Mr Galt tries to hide his deep and sincere mortification under a shallow and assumed magnanimity; but it will not do—no, James and John, it will not do—and the recollection of a single splenetic sentence throws a shadow over almost every page of the Biography, and induces Mr Galt, sometimes, we daresay, unconsciously and unawares, to wind up almost every paragraph with some assertion or limitation slightly or severely injurious to the personal character of the Illustrious Unfortunate.

Shepherd. I wunna ca' that wicked—for that's a strang word—but it was weak—weak—weak—and will be seen through by the saun-blin'.[1]

North. I wish to set my friend Galt right upon this point.

[1] *Saun-blin'*—sandblind.

At the time Byron spoke of his being "the last person in the world on whom he could wish to commit plagiary," not one of our excellent and ingenious friend's many admirable tales had been even imagined—and the few attempts he had then made in literature—though bearing clear and even bright marks of genius—had been rather unfortunate. Mr Galt stood, and deserved to stand, very low as an author. We can sympathise with Byron's horror at being charged with plagiarism from such tragedies.[1] But Galt came to know at last where his strength lay—and his genius has been crowned with fame. All his contemporaries now acknowledge his extraordinary powers; and though at no time can we imagine that the author of *Childe Harold* and *Manfred* would have stolen jewels for his crown from that of the author of the *Annals of the Parish*, the *Ayrshire Legatees*, the *Provost*, and the *Entail;* yet there can be no doubt that he must have recognised the rare, singular, and original genius conspicuously displayed throughout all these admirable productions. Why then should Mr Galt's "fundamental features" have been thrown off their hinges by so slight a shock?

Shepherd. Isna the book clever?

North. It is. Some absurd expressions occur here and there, on which dolts and dunces have indulged in the most lugubrious merriment—and which one man of genius has whiled away an idle hour with cramming into a copy of no very amusing verses;[2] and I am sorry to say, that there is much obscure, and more false criticism, obvious to the meanest capacities—and, with the exception of Mr Moore, none but the meanest capacities have been employed in ridiculing or vilifying the book. But sins such as these could easily have been pardoned, had there been the redeeming spirit of the pure and high love of truth. "That amber immortalisation" (the expression of a man of genius), is, alas! wanting—and, therefore, there is much corrupt matter, and "instead of a sweet savour a stench."

Shepherd. I've some thochts, sir, o' writin a life o' Lord

[1] Galt's earliest publication was a volume entitled the "Tragedies of Maddalen, Agamemnon, Lady Macbeth, Antonia, and Clytemnestra."

[2] Thomas Moore, who, on the occasion of Galt's work, published a poor squib entitled "Alarming Intelligence—Revolution in the Dictionary—one Galt at the head of it."

Byron mysel—for though I ne'er saw him atween the een, I've had mony kind letters frae him—and I think there's as loud a ca' on me to produce ma contribution to his beeography as there was on Mr Galt.

North. But you must wait, my dear James, till a year or two after the publication of Mr Moore's *Life of Byron.* Any interference with him at present would be unkind and unhandsome—and would look like an attempt to hustle and jostle him out of the market.

Shepherd. What for no me as weel's Galt?

North. There ought to be as fine a sense of honour, James, between author and author, publisher and publisher—

Shepherd. As among thieves.

North. Or other gentlemen, in the affairs and intercourse of life. Mr Galt should have scorned to prepare, and Mr Colburn to publish, a Life of Byron, till Moore's and Murray's had had its run. That's poz.

Shepherd. Poz aneuch.

North. But instead of having had its run, one half of it is yet unpublished—and the other half yet in quarto. Silver against gold—shillings against guineas—is hardly fair play.

Shepherd. But canna Muir's gold beat Galt's silver, or rather brass, sir?

North. You misunderstand me, James—Moore costs as many guineas as Galt shillings.

Shepherd. Galt and Colburn should hae waited—as I shall do—if they wished the public to look on them—I will not say as honest—but as highly honourable men.

North. One-half of Mr Galt's volume may be said to be borrowed.

Shepherd. Say stown——

North. From Mr Moore——

Shepherd. Too——hoo; or whare else could he hae got the facks about his boyhood and youth—and mony o' them about his manhood?

North. Nowhere else—as well observed the *Monthly Review.*

Shepherd. Fair play's a jewel, foul's paste. But the Public ee sune kens the difference; the jewel she fixes on her breast or forehead, the paste finds its way into the Jakes.

North. The volume is the first number of the NATIONAL

Library.[1] But I trust that the spirit in which it has been hatched, and huddled to market, is not *National* on either side of the Tweed. Number second is—the BIBLE! the contents of the Bible, and not its history, as its senseless title would indicate. Now, James, what a bound from Byron to the Bible! Does the Rev. Mr Gleig think it decorous for a divine to put into the one hand of a young Christian lady a book containing a pretty picture and panegyric of Lord Byron's kept-mistress,[2] and into the other the History of the Bible? He thinks so,—and that he may be able to do it, he plunders Stackhouse as prodigally as Mr Galt plunders Moore. Messrs Galt and Gleig are both Scotchmen,—so are we,—and we must again enter our protest against the *Nationality* of a library conducted on such principles.

Shepherd. Heaven preserve us! hoo mony Leebraries[3] are there gaun to be at this yepoch! The march o' Intellect will be stopped by stumblin outower so mony bales o' prented paper thrawn in its way as steppin-stanes to expedite its approach to perfectibility! The people will be literally *pressed* till death. Is that a pun?

North. I presume, since there is such a supply, that there is a demand. But as I cannot say that in the stillest night of a quick spring I ever heard the grass growing, so——

Shepherd. What! never a bit thin, fine rustle, sound and nae sound, that tauld o' the gradual expansion of some sweet germ gainin in hicht about the thousand part o' a hair's-breadth in ae dewy moment, and thus waxin in the coorse o' March, April, May, and June, intil gerse that in wadin thro't in the first week o' July, afore mawin, would reach up to the waistband o' your breeks?

North. The people appear to me to want bread rather than books.

Shepherd. Let them hae baith.

North. But bread first, James.

Shepherd. Surely—for wha can read to ony purpose on an empty stamack? For, suppose they were to swallow some pages o' paragraphs out o' a byuck, hoo the deevil in that

[1] "The National Library," which did not extend beyond a few volumes, was conducted by the Rev. G. R. Gleig, and published by Colburn and Bentley. Galt's *Life of Byron* was No. I.; and this was followed by Gleig's *History of the Bible.* [2] The Countess Guiccioli. [3] *Leebraries*—libraries.

state could they dijeest it? They would bock the best byuck that ever was bun'.

North. But the Libraries I allude to are not for the poor, James, but the "well-off," the wealthy, or the rich.

Shepherd. That's a' richt aneuch. I'm for everything cheap. Yet, sir, observe hoo the human mind comes to despise everything cheap. There's port wine. A' at ance, some years sin' syne, port wine tummled doun ever sae mony shillins the bottle—and I drank some at the Harrow last nicht at half-a-croon, o' the famous veentage o' the year wan—and better black-strap never touched a wizen. I remember hoo a' the middle classes—includin, in a genteel toun like Embro', nine-tenths o' the poppilation—at the first dounfa' o' the article, clapped their hauns, and swore to substitute port in place o' porter, and Cape wine (a bad exchange) for sma' yill. Mony o' them did sae; and you saw citizens smellin at corks, and heard them talkin o' auld port, and crust, and the like, wha used to be content wi' their tippenny. But the passion for port was sune satiated—for the port itsel, however cheap, was vulgar; or even if no vulgar, it was common, and in the power o' the said multifawrious middle classes, baith in the New and the Auld Town. So the boddies took to the toddy again—wi' het water and broon sugar—which, though cheap too, was the drink that had been lang natural to their condition. There—ye hae baith argument and illustration.

North. A sort of imaginative reasoning that is apt to lead a weak or incautious mind astray. I am, however, far from entirely dissenting from your opinion; and therefore, a truce to philosophising about the Spirit of the Age—and let me whisper into your ear, that the whole is a Speculation among the Booksellers. Now, the Spirit of the Age is one thing, and the Spirit of the Trade is another; and therefore, the question is, are the Trade (the term is collective) ruining themselves—or, if not so, destroying their profits—by competition?

Shepherd. Just as wi' steamboats on the river Clyde—there being now some saxty, I understaun', a' plyin 'tween Glasgow, Greenock, and the Isles.

North. Now, James, I hope all the Libraries will prosper. But I fear some will dwine and die. The best will endure, and enduring flourish; the worst will become bankrupt; and

the various go-betweens the best and worst will never enrich either the pockets of the publishers, or the pericraniums of their purchasers, and expire, one after another, like so many candles, some farthing, some half-a-dozen to the pound, and some "lang-twa's." Next Noctes I shall rip up the merits and demerits of them all—meanwhile pass the Jug.

Shepherd. You hae been rather ponderous on that pint, sir. But to return to Galt—like the dowg to his vo——

North. James—James—James!

Shepherd. They tell me that Mr Muir has been quizzin Galt in some sateerical lines—Are they just uncommon facetious, sir?

North. Why, but so-so, James—not much amiss—the merest trifle—airy and ingenious enough—but without gall towards Galt; and, since I love to be candid, fribbleish and feeble.[1] But oh, James! Heaven have mercy on my old bones! when I think on the cruel load laid upon them by what Mr Galt, or some friend of Mr Galt's, has supposed to be the Retort Courteous, or Quip Modest to Mr Thomas's *jeu-d'esprit!*[2]—Poor as that *jeu-d'esprit* is, it makes no pretensions, and no doubt was thrown off by Mr Moore with the same ease as an answer to an invitation to dinner; but the answer of the anser is indeed like the gabbling of ever so many geese disturbed in their green-mantled pool by a few pebbles shied at them by some sportive passenger who wishes not to hurt a hair of their head—I beg their pardon—a feather; and who, in spite of his previous knowledge of the character of the animal, is amazed at the multitudinous din of their protracted clamour, so utterly disproportionate to the original cause of offence—itself so slight and evanescent. In this case there is an additional absurdity in the behaviour of the geese. For Mr Galt, at whom Mr Moore threw the small polished pebbles, harmless as peas out of a pop-gun, so far from being a goose, is a swan—though of late he has, contrary both to reason and instinct, associated with a flock of those noisy waddlers, and by people at some distance, who may

[1] See *ante*, p. 77.

[2] Some friend of Galt's appears to have published a rejoinder to Moore's squib. But neither squib nor rejoinder are worth retrieving from the oblivion into which they have fallen.

not be very sharp or long-sighted, must lay his account with being taken—mistaken—for a prodigious gander—within a few stone-weight of that greatest of all ganders—the Glasgow gander—who ought to have his long neck broken for hissing at Sir Walter Scott.[1] The geese in whose company he was walking at the time of the assault, could not stomach in their mighty hearts the affront of being insulted in the person of him their sultaun—and instanter stretching themselves all up on their splay-feet that love the mud, and all at once flapping with their wings the oozy shallows, they gave vent to their heroic indignation in more ways than it would be pleasant or proper to describe—to the disturbed wonder of the neighbourhood, and, if the truth were known, to their own astonishment.

Shepherd. Do you ken, sir, that I admire guses — tame guses — far mair nor wild anes. A wild guse, to be sure, is no bad eatin, shot in season — out o' season, and after a lang flicht, what is he but a rickle o' banes? But a tame guse, aff the stubble, sirs—(and what'n a hairst this 'ill be for guses, the stooks hae been sae sair shucken!)—roasted afore a clear fire to the swirl o' a worsted string — stuffed as fu's he can haud frae neck to doup wi' yerbs—and devoored wi' about equal proportions o' mashed potawties, and a clash o' aipple sass—the creeshy breist o' him shinin outower a' its braid beautifu' rotundity, wi' a broonish and yellowish licht, seemin to be the verra concentrated essence o' tastefu' sappiness, the bare idea o' which, at ony distance o' time and place, brings a gush o' water out o' the pallet—his theeghs slightly crisped by the smokeless fire to the preceese pint best fitted for crunchin — and, in short, the toot-an-sammal[1] o' the Bird, a perfeck specimen o' the beau-ideal o' the true Bird o' Paradise,—for sic a guse, sir—(but oh! may I never be sae sairly tempted)—wad a man sell his kintra or his conscience — and neist day strive to stifle his remorse by gobblin up the giblet-pie.

North. To hear you speak, James, the world would take you for an epicure and glutton, who bowed down five times a-day in fond idolatry before the belly-god. What a delusion!

Shepherd. What does the silly senseless world ken about the real character o' the puir Ettrick Shepherd, ony mair than

[1] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 30, note 2. [2] Tout-en-semble.

about that o' puir Lord Byron. But you, sir, ken baith *his* by metafeesical intuitions, that see intil a man's sowl through the works o' his inspired genie, and the acts o' his distrackit life—though fate and fortune, doom and destiny, keepit ye twa far asunder a' the time that the noble Childe was driven along existence like the rack flyin overhead on the stormy skies,—and *mine* by that intercommunin o' a' high thochts and high feelings, sir, that, far far apairt frae a' fun and frolic, and wut, and humour and glee—(yet they, too, are in their season suitable, and tell tales aften no safe to be repeated o' secrets slumberin amang sorrows deep doun in that

"Strange tumultuous thing the human heart")

—hae aften given to the hollows o' the hills, where we twa hae walked thegither, far frae the ways o' man, frae the risin to the settin sun, the consecration as of some mighty temple.—Yes, Mr North, till all the visible region baith o' the earth and the heavens—the *ane* beautifu', beyond a' expression beautifu', wi' its gently undulating sea o' hills, greener than ony water-sea that ever rolled in sunshine, and aften, in glorious blinks, also purpler far, when the heather heights, suddenly light-smitten, coloured all the day with the lustre beaming from their gorgeous mantle,—and the *ither*, as we lay like sleepers on the sward—dreamers but no sleepers we—with half-shut eyes undrowsily watching the slow passing-by of the drowsy clouds, and drinkin in, wi' nae impatient thirst, but wi' a tranquil appetite divine, the blue liquid beauty o' the stainless ether—the *ither*, North, seeming, indeed, to deserve the holy name of heaven, whither, had I had wings of a dove, I would have flown away and been at rest; for thou, my friend, knowest, even as I know, that, except in those regions, rest there is none for us "poor sons of a day,"—and *that* thocht, sir, that keeps ebbing and flowing for ever in the silence and the solitude o' our sowls, gies a sanctity to the great sky-bow that bends over us, when it is strung in peacefu' beauty that changes a' creation into ae vast Place o' Worship.

North. Mere painted air!

Shepherd. Weel do I ken, sir, that it's naething else! Yet holy in my eyes has ever been what in Scotland we ca' "the lift," even as the Bible lyin open, during the hour of service,

on my father's knee! Nae senses have we to penetrate into infinitude and eternity. Frae such ideas do not our sowls recoil back on space and time, feeble and forlorn, and sore afraid! But God has given us imaginations, sir, wherewith to beautify and glorify into celestial and abiding tabernacles, terrestrial vapours in their ain nature evanescent as dreams!

North. James, give me your hand, our friendship is strong and sacred.

Shepherd. The shows o' natur, sir, are a' mere types; but there's nae sin, sir — be assured there's nae sin, sir, in looking on the type even as if it were the thing — the thocht typified; for such seems to be the natur o' the human sowl, weak, weak, weak, sir, even in its greatest strength, and relying on the senses for support even in its maist spiritual communings, and maist holy worship o' Him that inhabiteth Eternity.

North. Poetry—Philosophy—Religion.

Shepherd. I canna conceive a mair sacred, a mair holy task, than that which a man taks upon himsel, when he sits doun to write the life and character of his brither man. Afore he begins to write the capital letter at the beginnin o' the first word, he ocht to hae sat mony a lang hour, a' by himsel, in his study, and to hae walked at eventide mony a lang hour, a' by himsel alang the flowings of some river (hoo life-like!) —and to hae lain awake during mony a lang hour o' the night-watches, *and especially then a' by himsel*—meditating on the duty he has undertaken to perform, and comparin or contrastin, as it may be, what he *may conjecture* to hae been the character o' his brither, whom God has called to judgment, wi' what he *must ken* to be the character o' his ain sel, whom God next moment may call to his dread account. A' men hae mair nor an inklin o' their warst evil propensities, and their ain warst sins. When religion and philosophy speak o' the difficulty o' kennin ane's ain heart, they mean anither thing a'thegither; an' though an awfu' and a fearfu' thing, not to my present purpose, and to be haunled by me anither nicht, in anither discourse.

North. Why, you are giving us a sermon, James.

Shepherd. An' pray, sir, is there ony reason in the natur o' things why you should hae a' the preachin to yoursel? Noo, sir, I say that the beeographer wha acts thus will never cease

hearing a solemn whisper, as if direck frae Heaven—and it is frae Heaven — fillin, but no disturbin his ear — "Do unto others that which thou wouldst they should do unto thee!" O, sir! hoo universal is the application—at a' times—at a' seasons—to a' the meeserable race o' man—o' thae divine words! Hoo are they forgotten! In the passion o' action, gin I may sae speak, there seems amaist some excuse, drawn frae the constitution o' our natur, for the sound o' that heavenly voice being drooned amang the waves. But when a's calm aboon and aroun'—naething nor naebody troublin us —and yet the sense o' our ain sins as prevalent in our privacy as our sense o' the mercy o' the Most High towards us sinners —by what mysterious agency comes it about, that even then, wi' the cawnle twinklin peacefully afore us, like a bit starnie, through the glimmer o' our midnicht chaumer, and

"The wee bit ingle blinkin bonnily,"

and no a fit stirrin in a' the house, but the four feet o' some hungry, yet no unhappy moosie, gliding cannily alang the carpet in search o' some crumbs that may hae fa'n ahint a chair—O, sir! *whence* comes the thocht or the feelin o' evil in the heart o' a man at sic an hour as this, when, if ever guardian angels may be permitted to leave their celestial bowers for homes of earth, weel micht we howp to lie aneath the shadow o' the wings o' sic holy visitants! Yet, nae door flies open—nae wa' sinks—nor enter in, in visible troops, the Fiends and the Furies. But what ca' ye Envy, and Jealousy, and Malice, and Anger, and a' the rest o' the Evil Passions, that, as if gifted wi' ubiquity and perpetual presence, clutch our verra conscience by the hair o' the head, and bendin back its neck, break its very spine, till it's murdered or maimed, in death or dwaum—and oh! mercy! what a hubbub noo amang a' the desperate Distractions! Sometimes they sit upon the sowl, tearin out its een, like ravens or vultures——

North. James, enough! The truth shocks and sickens.

Shepherd. Weel, then, descend a' at ance frae thae maist fearsome hichts, commandin a bird's-eye view o' the empiry o' Sin and Evil——

North. Miltonic.

Shepherd. And merely ask yoursel, what wunner it was that sic a man as our freen John Galt, in general an excellent fal-

low, should hae been beguiled—betrayed—by some o' the meaner agencies, the lower spirits, to——

North. Compose No. I. of the "National Library!"

Shepherd. Just sae—and there's an anticlimax for you—wi' a vengeance and a thud! But when we first got on this topic, some hour or sae sin' syne, at the commencement o' this jug—What's this I was intendin to say? Ou ay. It was, that you ken ma character by havin aften studied it in sic moods and seasons. Noo, I was a few minutes ago describin a roasted guse—wi' a' the zest o' a glutton whose imagination was kindled by his pallet. And at that moment as sincere was I as ever you beheld me when standin by the side o' some great loch, and gazing on the sun sinking behind the mountains. But what care I, sir, for a' the guses that ever was roasted? No ae single strae. Gie me a bit cheese and bread when I am hungry, and I will say grace ower't, sittin by some spring amang the hills, wi' as gratefu' a heart as ever yearned in a puir sinner's breist towards the Giver o' a' mercies. Nae objections hae I—why sud I?—to a jug o' toddy, especially, sir, sittin cheek-by-jowl wi' auld Christopher. But mony and mony a day o' drivin rain and blashin sleet and driftin snaw hae I been out frae morn till nicht amang the hills—ay, sir, frae nicht till morn—a' thro' the wild sughing hours o' the mirk nichts o' winter, without ever thinkin o' spirits in the shape o' whisky ony mair than if in this weary world there never had been ae single still! Sumphs—base insolent sumphs—say I, sir, that dare to insult the Shepherd at his Glenlivet with the king of men. Has the aipple o' my ee, sir, tint[1] ae hue o' its brichtness, or shows it one blood-shot streak or stain o' intemperance? Has the aipple o' my cheek, sir, tint ae hue o' its ruddiness, or shows it one blotch or pimple o' excess either in eatin or drinkin? Damn the Cockney cooards and calumniawtors——

North. Unclench your hairy fist, my beloved Shepherd, and let me see thee smile again as sweetly as if singing a song to the Queen of the Fairies among the tomans[2] of her ancient woods.

Shepherd. Hatred o' hypocrisy sets my blood in a low,[3] and converts it, for a space, "brief as the lightning in a collied night," into liquid fire. Here, sir, here, in this our dearly-be-

[1] *Tint*—lost. [2] *Toman*—a knoll, a thicket. [3] *Low*—blaze.

loved and beautifu' Blue Parlour,—and there, sir, there—through that wa'—in the fantastic French Hunting Chaumer,—and yonner, sir, yonner in the shooperb—the shooblime Saloon,—what whisper ever heard the walls—and walls 'tis said have ears—of envy, or jealousy, or calumny, or of any evil thocht towards any one, high or humble, of the great family of Man?

North. None, never!

Shepherd. Has a man great genius?—you, sir, trumpet-tongued, hail his advent when "far off his coming shines," and the nations as yet know not what means the apparition on the weather-gleam, till you tell them 'tis a—Poet.

North. Spare my blushes. Yet I feel in all humility that it is the truth.

Shepherd. Has a man sma' genius, seeks Christopher to extinguish it? Na, na, na. He kens that the spark is frae heaven, and sooner than tread it out, would he put his fit on the adder-hole. Oh! weel ken you, sir, my auld wise freen, that genius yearns for glory mair passionately even than ever love yearned for beauty, and that to him disappointment is despair, and despair is death! A sneer, sir, on your face, micht drive some bricht-hoped laddie mad, while he was seekin, and findin, and losin his flowery way in the wilderness o' the imagination, day after day, and nicht after nicht, for years, and years, and years, mistakin dreams for realities, and believin a' things to be in natur verily as beautifu' as his ain thochts!

North. Rather would I die, James.

Shepherd. Sir, ye ken, and I ken, but aiblins I better nor you, for I was born, as Burns says, in an "auld clay biggin," and had little or nae assistance and support to my sowl when it was beginnin to work like barm within me, or rather, if you'll no think the eemage ower gran' for the occasion, when it was beginnin to trummle and crummle, and sigh, and groan, and heave, and hotch, like what ane reads about the earlier stages o' the proceedings o' some earthquack,—I say, sir, that I was then left amaist entirely to my ain silly sel, wi' nacbody to tell me what a' that disturbance within me micht mean, whether it was for gude or for evil, frae heaven or hell—ye maun pardon me, sir, for sic strong expressions, but aften and aften did I shudder to think that I had fa'n intil the power o' Satan—sae black, sir, at times were the thochts that suddenly assailed me in solitude, till, wad you believe me, they took the

shape o' great lang shadows lying threateningly on the sward afore me, when not a cloud was in heaven, and the sun shining like a god in his ain undivided sky. The neebours—nay, my verra faither and mother, and the lave o' our ain bairns, feared, when I was about the size or sae o' my wee Jamie—God bless him !——

North. Amen !

Shepherd. ——that I was gettin mad—and sae for a while did I mysel—but I sune cam to ken that it was nae madness, but genie working in the dark, like a mole or a miner, till it fand its way up into the air, and then eagle-eyed beheld the beauty o' the heavens and the earth, in a trance that passes away, sir, as ye ken, aneath the presence and the pressure o' cares and anxieties, and duties—often a weary wecht—but ever and anon returns, a renewed revelation by Natur, to them who keep holy the Covenant sworn at her altar amang the mysteries that haunted the world of eye and ear in the morn o' life.—Nae yawning, if you please, sir. Better that you should at ance coup ower in a dwaum o' sleep.

North. I could cut with a blunt knife the throat of any man who yawns while I am speaking to him—especially if he attempts to conceal his crime, by putting his hand to his mouth; yet, such a bundle of inconsistencies is man, that confound me if I could listen for five minutes to the angel Raphael himself—or Gabriel either—without experiencing that sensation about the jaws which precedes and produces that sin. The truth is, that admiration soon makes me yawn—and I fear that Sir Walter, and Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and Bowles, and others, may sometimes have felt queer at the frequent, if not incessant, opening and shutting of the folding-doors of my mouth, during their most amusing or instructive reasoning or imaginative harangues. I wish I could find some way of letting them know, that so far from any offence being meant, or weariness experienced by me, I was in fact repaying them for the delight they gave me, by the most sincere, if not the most delicate tribute of applause, which it was in my power to render, or rather out of my power to withhold from genius and wisdom.

Shepherd. I never in a' my born days, and I'm noo just the age o' Sir Walter, and, had he been leevin, o' Bonnypratt, met a perfeckly pleasant—that is a'thegither enchantin man in a

party—and I have lang thocht there's nae sic thing in existence as poo'rs[1] o' conversation. There's Sir Walter wi' his everlastin anecdotes, nine out o' ten meanin naething, and the tenth itsel as auld as the Eildon Hills, but not, like them, cleft in three, which would be a great relief to the listener, and aiblins alloo a nap atween—yet hoo the coofs o' a' ages, sexes, and ranks, belabour your lugs with their lauchter at every clause—and baser than ony slaves that ever swept the dust with their faces from the floors of Eastern despots, swallow his stalest stories as if they were manna dropping fresh frae the heaven o' imagination! Yet you see the crust aften sticks in their throats—and they narrowly escape chokin. Yet I love and venerate Sir Walter aboon a' ither leevin men except yoursel, sir, and for that reason try to thole his discourse. As to his ever hearin richt ae single syllable o' what ye may be sayin to him, wi' the maist freendly intent o' enlichtenin his weak mind, you maun never indulge ony howp o' that kind—for o' a' the absent men when anither's speakin, that ever glowered in a body's face, without seemin to ken even wha he's lookin at, Sir Walter is the foremost; and gin he behaves in that gate to a man o' original genius like me, you may conceive his treatment o' the sumphs and sumphesses that compose fashionable society.

North. James—be civil.

Shepherd. Yet tak up ony trash o' travels by ony outlandish foreigner through our kintra, and turn to the chapter, "Visit to Abbotsford," and be he frog-catin Frenchman, sneevlin through his nose——

North. Or gross guttural German, groaning about Goethe——

Shepherd. ——or girnin and grimacin Italian, wi' his music and his macaroni, fiddlin and fumblin his way aiblins into marriage wi' some deluded lassie o' condition wi' the best o' Scottish bluid in her veins——

North. Sarcastic dog!

Shepherd. ——and one and all alike—each with the peculiar loathsomeness belonging to the mode of adulation practised in his ain kintra—begin slabberin and slimin the illustrious baronet frae head to feet, till he is all over slaver. Hoo he maun scunner!

[1] *Poo'rs*—powers.

North. Perhaps not.

Shepherd. He maun. Then each Tramp begins to ring the same changes on his fool's bells about Sir Walter's poo'rs o' conversation, his endless stores o' information, his inexhaustible mines o' intellectual treasures——

North. Stop, James—lay your hand on your heart, and tell me—we are quite alone, and you need not look at the screen, for there is nobody behind it—are you not jealous?

Shepherd. Me jealous! and o' Sir Walter! As I shall answer to God at the great day of judgment, I am not! I glory in my country for his sake. But say—sir—unseal your lips and speak—should he, who of all men I ever kent is the least o' a tyrant, be thus served by slaves?

North. No great man of any age, James, during his mortal lifetime, ever so lived, by the peaceful power of genius, in the world's eye, and in the world's minds, and the world's heart, as Sir Walter Scott.

Shepherd. None whatsomever.

North. Why? Because never before had genius such as his dealt with subjects of such universal and instant interest.

Shepherd. What! No Shakspeer?

North. No; not Shakespeare.

Shepherd. But wull he leeve as lang's Shakspeer?

North. Why the devil should he not? Why, you and I will live as long as Shakespeare—but it is not mere length of life, James, but intensity and universality of life, that constitutes the immortality of the soul.

Shepherd. Gude—gude. In ae sense, a' that's prented may live for ever; in anither sense, amaist a' that's prented dies. Common owthers leeve but in their byucks,—and every time ye shut his byuck, it may be said that ye put a common owther to death, or imprison him in a cell. He is in oblivion. But ance in ages an owther is born — Homer, Shakspeer, Scott—wha leeve na in their byucks alone—though edition after edition keeps perpetually pourin out o' the press—but omnipresent in the regions o' Thocht and Feelin, as sunshine fills the day.

North. Gude—gude. But when, James, was there ever religion without superstition? worship without idolatry?

Shepherd. Never in the history o' man. I see your drift, sir. Therefore it is—would the auld cunning carle say—that

while the wise, the good, and the free unveil their foreheads in manly admiration afore the genius o' Sir Walter,—preserving a' the while the erect attitude o' that being, to whom alone the Latin poet said God gave "a sublime face," that he might behold the heavens and all their stars,—the wiseacres, the fules, and the slaves, fall down brutishly before him, and lick the dust aff his feet.

North. James, a peg lower, if you please. Let Sir Walter produce any sort of stuff he chooses, and that set of worshippers swear it is beaten gold. There is his *Demonology and Witchcraft*—a poor book——

Shepherd. What say ye? a puir byuck on Demonology and Witchcraft by Sir Walter Scott?

North. Poor in matter and in manner—in substance and in style. And yet the paid paltry press are at this moment all pawing it with their praise. Two years ago I spake of—— PUFFING. One year ago, the *Edinburgh Review*—following in my wake—did the same; but it scarified and seared the skin of the small sinners, and left that of the great sleek and without a seam. But "a braw time's comin"—and not many months shall go by, James, till I flay the Trade.

Shepherd (*rising from his seat*). Ha! Mr Tickler, hoo are you—and hoo cam you intil the room?

North. Tickler! James. I see no Tickler.

Shepherd (*somewhat agitated*). Mr Tickler, speak—smile—lauch! O lauch—lauch—lauch, sir; I'll thank ye frae the bottom o' my sowl to lauch!

North. Nay—this is like midsummer madness at the end of October. Don't stare so, I beseech you, my dear Shepherd.

Shepherd. Luk—luk—luk! Fixed een—white cheeks—blue lips—drippin hair—a ghastly coontenance, an' a spectral shape—It's his wraith—his wraith—and ere midnicht, we shall be hearin a sugh gaun through the city that our freen has been drooned!

North (*alarmed*). I see nothing.

Shepherd (*coming round to* NORTH). There—there—richt opposite to us on the wa'!

North. Shall I ring the bell?

Shepherd. What said ye? See, it lifts its corpse-like hauns! Oh! that it would but speak!

North (*recovering his self-possession*). Your stomach is out of order, James—your bowels——

Shepherd. I would fain howp sae—but I fear no! Mercy on us! it's liftin itsel up, and movin like a shadow—noo—noo—thank heaven! it has evaporated, and is gane.

(*Enter* AMBROSE *in violent agitation.*)

Ambrose. Oh! dear—Oh! dear—Sirs, there's a rumour flying through the city that the body of Mr Tickler has been found drowned in one of the Leith Docks![1]

North and Shepherd. Oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! oh!

[*Exeunt Omnes distracted.*

[1] A false alarm. Tickler reappears in the Noctes for February 1831. The Shepherd, in the playfulness of his fancy, was merely enacting some of the stories of second-sight recorded in Sir Walter's *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft.*

XXVII.

(JANUARY 1831.)

Scene,—The Snuggery. Time,—Seven o'clock.

NORTH, SHEPHERD, O'BRONTE.

Shepherd. The wee bit cosy octagon Snuggery metamorphosed, I declare, intil a perfeck paragon o' a leebrary, wi' glitterin brass-wired rosewood shelves, through whilk the bricht-bun' byuckies glint splendid as sunbeams, yet saftened and subdued somehow or ither, doun to a specie o' moonlicht, sic as lonely shepherd on the hill lifts up his hauns to admire alang the fringed edges o' a fleecy mass o' clouds, when the orb is just upon the verra comin out again intil the blue, and the entire nicht beautifies itsel up, like a leevin being, to re-hail the stainless apparition!

North. Homeric!

Shepherd. Ay, Homer was a shepherd like mysel, I'se warrant him, afore he lost his een, in lieu o' whilk, Apollo, the Great Shepherd o' a' the Flocks o' the Sky, gied him—and wasna't a glorious recompense, sir?—for a' the rest o' his days, the gift o' immortal sang.

North. 'Tis fitted up, James, after a fancy-plan of our poor, dear, old, facete, feeling, ingenious, and most original friend—Johnny Ballantyne.

Shepherd. Johnny Ballantyne!

North. Methinks I see him—his slight slender figure restless with a spirit that knew no rest—his face so suddenly changeful in its expression from what a stranger might have thought habitual gravity, into what his friends knew to be native there—glee irrepressible and irresistible—the very madness of mirth, James, in which the fine ether of animal spirits seemed to respire the breath of genius, and to shed through

the room, or the open air, a contagion of cheerfulness, against which no heart was proof, however sullen, and no features could stand, however grim—but still all the company, Canters and Covenanters inclusive, relaxed and thawed into murmurs of merriment, even as the strong spring sunshine sends a-singing the bleak frozen moor-streams, till all the wilderness is alive with music.

Shepherd. He was indeed a canty[1] cretur—a delichtfu' companion.

North. I hear his voice this moment within my imagination, as distinct as if it were speaking. 'Twas exceedingly pleasant.

Shepherd. It was that. Verra like Sandy's—only a hue merrier, and a few beats in the minute faster. Oh, sir! hoo he would hae enjoyed the Noctes, and hoo the Noctes would hae enjoyed him!

North. In the midst of our merriment, James, often has that thought come over me like a cloud.

Shepherd. What'n a lauch!

North. Soul-and-heart-felt!

Shepherd. Mony a strange story fell down stane-dead when his tongue grew mute. Thousands o' curious, na, unaccountable anecdotes, ceased to be the day his een were closed; for he telt them, sir, as ye ken, wi' his een mair than his lips; and his verra hauns spak, when he snapped his forefinger and his thoom, or wi' the haill five spread out — and he had what I ca' an elegant haun o' fine fingers, as maist wutty men hae — manually illustrated his subjeck, till the words gaed aff, murmuring like bees frae the tips, and then Johnny was quate[2] again for a minute or sae, till some ither freak o' a fancy came athwart his genie, and instantly loupt intil look, lauch, or speech—or rather a' the three thegither in ane, while Sir Walter himsel keckled on his chair, and leanin wi' thae extraordinar chowks o' his, that aften seem to me amaist as expressive as his pile o' forehead, hoo would he fix the grey illumination o' his een on his freen Johnny, and ca' him by that familiar name, and by the sympathy o' that maist capawcious o' a' sowls, set him clean mad—richt-doun wudd a'thegither—till really, sir, he got untholeably divertin, and folk compleened o' pains in their sides, and sat wi' the tears rinnin doun their cheeks, praying him for gudeness to haud his tongue, for that

[1] *Canty*—cheerful. [2] *Quate*—quiet.

gin he didna, somebody or ither would be fa'in doun in a fit, and be carried out dead.[1]

North. A truce, my dear James, to all such dreams. Yet pleasant, though mournful to the soul, is the memory of joys that are past! And never, methinks, do we feel the truth of that beautiful sentiment more tenderly, than when dimly passeth before our eyes, along the mirror of imagination,—for I agree with thee, thou sagest of Shepherds, that when the heart is finely touched by some emotion from the past, the mirror of imagination and of memory is one and the same, held up as if in moonlight by the hands of Love or Friendship,—never feel we the truth of that beautiful sentiment more tenderly, I repeat, James, than when we suddenly re-behold there the image—the shadow of some face that when alive wore a smile of perpetual sunshine—somewhat saddened now, though cheerful still, in the momentary vision—and then, as we continue to gaze upon it, undergoing sad obscuration, and soon disappearing in total eclipse.

(*Enter* Mr Ambrose, Mons. Cadet, King Pepin, Sir David Gam, Tappytoorie, *and the* Pech, *with Tea, Coffee, Toast, Muffins, &c.*)

Shepherd. When a body has had an early denner, what a glorious meal's the Fowre-oors![2] Hooly—hooly, lads. Ay—that's richt, Tappy—just set doun the muffins there close to ma nieve; oh! but they seem sappy! Sir Dawvit, be ye baronet or be ye knicht, you've a fine ee for the balancin o' a table, or ye had never clashed doun on that spat thae creeshy crampets. Pippin, you're a dextrous cretur, wi' your ashets o' wat

[1] For further particulars respecting Johnny Ballantyne, see Lockhart's *Life of Scott.* He died in 1824. "As Sir Walter and I," says Mr Lockhart, "stood together while they were smoothing the turf over John Ballantyne's remains in the Canongate Churchyard, the heavens, which had been dark and slaty, cleared up suddenly, and the midsummer sun shone forth in his strength. Scott, over awake to the 'skiey influences,' cast his eye along the overhanging line of the Calton Hill, with its gleaming walls and towers, and then turning to the grave again, 'I feel,' he whispered in my ear, 'I feel as if there would be less sunshine for me from this day forth.'

"As we walked homewards, Scott told me, among other favourable *traits* of his friend, one little story which I must not omit. He remarked one day to a poor student of divinity attending his auction, that he looked as if he were in bad health. The young man assented with a sigh. 'Come,' said Ballantyne, 'I think I ken the secret of a sort of draft that would relieve you—particularly'—he added, handing him a cheque for £5 or £10,—'particularly, my dear, if taken on an empty stomach.'"—*Life of Scott,* vol. vi. p. 329, second edition.

[2] *The four-hours*—tea and more solid accompaniments.

and dry toast. And oh! my man Pechy! but you've a stout back and a strong arm to deposit wi' sic an air o' majesty that twa-quartern loaf fresh frae the baker's, and steamin as sweet's a bank o' violets after a shower.—Mr Awmrose, ye needna bile ony mair eggs—for though they're no very big anes, yet whatever the size, sax is ma number—thae bit chickens maun hae belanged to a late cleckin—But whare's the Roond? Ay—ay—Prince o' Picardy! I see ye bearin him frae the bit sideboardie.—Noo attend to Mr North, Mr Awmrose, and dinna mind me—tak tent o' Mr North, sir—and see that he wants for naething—for I discern by the glegness o' the een o' him, that he's yaup—yaup—yaup—and 's sharpenin his teeth wi' the fork, till you hear them raspin like a mower whettin his scythe.

North. Ambrose, *bring yon.*

Ambrose. Here they are, sir. (*Placing them before* Mr Hogg.)

Shepherd. Angels and ministers o' grace defend us!—what the deevil's thae?

North. What think ye, James?

Shepherd. Hauns! Human hauns! Preserved human hauns! Pickled human hauns! The preserved and pickled human hauns o' a Christian!

North. Well—what although?

Shepherd. Weel! what altho'? Are they a present frae Dr Knox, or his freen Hare?[1] Aiblins the verra hauns o' Burke himsel! What throttlers!

North. Why, they are throttlers, James — but they never belonged in life to any of the gang.

Shepherd. That's a great relief—But excuse me, sir, for haudin ma nose—for I fear they're stinkin.

North. Sweet, I assure you, James, as the downy fist of a virgin, yet warm from her own bosom. Bear-paws from Scandinavia—a Christmas-present from my intrepid friend Lloyd,[2] now Schall-king of the Frozen Forests.

Shepherd. Let's pree them.

[*The* Shepherd *takes one Paw, and* North *another, and they both begin to masticate.*

Ambo. Exquisite!

Shepherd. Are ye at the taes, sir?

North. I am.

[1] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 193.

[2] The author of *Field Sports in the North of Europe*, reviewed by Professor Wilson in *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xxvii.

Shepherd. Mine's is pickit as clean's an ivory kame for the tap-knot o' a bit bonny lassie. Noo for the palms.

North. The mustard?

Shepherd. Eh?

North. The mustard?

Shepherd. Eh? Oh! but the palms is prime. The ile o' palms![1] Far better nor the ignorant warld suspecks. Nae wunner the beasts sooks them in their wunter-caves.

North. Try your paw with chicken, James.

Shepherd. I'm doin sae, sir. Frae this time, henceforrit and for evermair, hoo wersh the race o' hams! What's pig-face to bear-paw!

North. Hyperion to a Satyr.

Shepherd. Say Satyr to Hyperion, sir. Mine's anatomeezed —and lo! the skeleton! O the wonnerfu' warks o' natur!

North. There!

Shepherd. What'n a *what!*[2] I'm hungrier than if I had ate a haill solan-guse. What'n a *what!*

North. Let us now set in to serious eating, James.

Shepherd. Be't sae. Seelence!

[*There is silence in the Snuggery from half-past seven till half-past eight; or, rather, a sound like the whutter of wild-fowl on the feed along a mud-bank, by night, in Poole Harbour, at low-water, as described by Colonel Hawker.*

North. James?

Shepherd. What's your wull, sir?

North. A caulker?

Shepherd. Wi' a' my heart and sowl. Here's to Mr Lloyd's health and happiness—and when he's dune huggin the bears, may he get a wife!

North. Amen!

Shepherd. Noo, sir, let's hae some leeterary conversation.

North. I was just going to propose it, James. Suppose we have a little poetry.

Shepherd. What a cauld squash o' poetry's this we've had blawn intil our faces o' late, like sae mony blashy shoo'rs o' sleet? But Stoddart[3] has genius.

[1] Oil of palms—a play on Professor Wilson's *Isle of Palms.*

[2] *What*—whot.

[3] Thomas Tod Stoddart is the author of *The Angler's Companion to the Rivers and Lochs of Scotland,* a standard work on fishing in all its departments: he has also published some admirable angling songs.

North. He has. Let us speak now of the great masters. Lean back, James—hand-over-head—and pull out the volume it chances to light on—one or other of the works of the Immortals.

Shepherd (*obeying the mandate*).—Muir's *Life o' Byron*—First volumn! Whan are we to hae the second?

North. I know not. Probably ere next Noctes.

Shepherd. I'm wearyin unco sair for the second volumm. But our carrier, when he's gotten a heavy load o' the necessaries o' life, sic as vivers,[1] and pots and pans, and ither household utensils, aye leaves ahint him at Selkirk a' parshels that he jalouses may conteen byucks, "Especially," quo' he, "thae great muckle clumsy square anes ye ca' quartos."

North. Not so with Maga?

Shepherd. Na, na! A bale o' *Blackwood*'s as licht as a feather, and he swears that his beast never reests on the steyest[2] brae gin Maga's aboard. The buoyancy o' the bale, sir, gars his cart dance alang a' the ups and douns i' the road through the Forest, like a bit pleasure yaweht tilting outower the waves at Windermere Regatta.

North. Poetry!

Shepherd. I can tell ye a curious tale about this quarto. It lay for the best part o' a moon amang some cheeses, at Selkirk, afore it was discovered by some weans to be a byuck, by means o' the broon paper and the direction, and was forwarded at last to Mount Benger in a return cart loaded wi' strae. But Gudefallow clean forgot that his lordship was there, and sae by some queer mischance he got bundled up intil the laft; and mair nor a month afterwards, you may guess the surprise o' ane o' the hizzies that had gane up for fodder, when a great big broon square paper parshel bounced out o' her lap in the byre——

North. Poor Girzzy!

Shepherd. —— to the sair disappointment o' Crummie, wha, after smellin an' snokin an' snortin at it for a while, began cavin her head like a dementit cretur, and then ettlin[3] to toss 't out o' the door, gettin't entangled by the twine on the point o' ane o' her horns, she brak out o' the byre, as if stung by a gadflee, or some divine æstrum——

North. Classical!

Shepherd. —— and then doun the knowe, across the holm,

[1] *Vivers*—victuals. [2] *Steyest*—steepest. [3] *Ettlin*—attempting.

ower the Yarrow, up the brae, and out o' sicht ahint the hill, richt awa like a red-deer, clean out the region o' Yarrow a'thegither, and far awa ayont the head o' Ettrick into the verra heart o' Eskdalemuir, whar she was fun', days after, sair forfeuchen,[1] ye may weel suppose, wi' the Beeography across her een, just as if she had been a bill[2] gien to stickin, wi' a brodd on his griesly forehead. A' the shepherds, ye ken, sir, are gude scholars in our region — and him that first fand her was the President o' the Eskdalemuir Spootin, Theological, and Philosophical Club. Puttin on his specks—for he's a gey auld cretur — he sune made out the inscription in capitals on the forehead o' the beast — "JAMES HOGG, ESQ., MOUNT BENGER, YARROW, BY SELKIRK," and then in Eetälics aneath— "*To be forwarded by the first opportunity.*"

North. That must have been a poser to the President.

Shepherd. It was that, sir. Nor was his perplexity diminished by the twa sma' words in ane o' the corners—"*Per mail.*" The mail hasna begun yet to rin that road, ye ken, sir, in the shape o' a cotch, and the President himsel confessed to me, on tellin the tale, that amang the multitude o' out-o'-the-way thochts that crooded intil his brain, to account for the faynomenon,—ane o' them was, that in this age o' inventions, when some newfangled notion or ither, out o' some ingenious noddle, is pitten daily intil practice for expeditin human intercoorse, the coo was an express——

North. Hee—hee—hee! James, you tickle my fancy, and I get slightly convulsed about the midriff.

Shepherd. Yes, sir—that the coo was an express sent by Mr Elliot o' Selkirk.

North. Instead of a carrier-pigeon.

Shepherd. Just sae, sir. And that the coo, ha'in been bred in Eskdalemuir, had returned to the spat o' her nativity, eager to browse the pasturage on which she had fed when a young and happy quey. Howsomever, to mak a lang story short, our freen contrived to get the quarto aff Crummie's horns, and brocht it doun, neist day, himsel to Mount Benger, when, by layin a' our heads thegither, we cam to see intil the heart o' the mystery, which, like maist others, when severely scrutineesed, degenerated intil an accountable though somewhat uncommon fack.

North. Open the volume, James, at haphazard—and let the

[1] *Forfeuchen*—fatigued. [2] *Bill*—bull.

first page that meets your eyes be the text of our discursive dialogue.

Shepherd. Sall I read it up, sir?

North. Do, *ore rotundo*, like a Grecian. What seems it about?

Shepherd. The marriages o' men o' genius — if I dinna mistak——

North. Hark! and lo!

[*The time-piece strikes nine, and enter* PICARDY *and Tail, with the materiel. They sweep away the "Reliquias Danaum," and deposit all things needful in their place.*

Shepherd. Clever chiels, thae, sir.

North. I hope, James, that Mr Moore will strike out of the volume, before it becomes an octavo, that misbegotten, misconceived, misdelivered, misplaced, and mistimed abortion——

Shepherd. What'n a skrow[1] o' misses, like a verra boardin-schule letten lowse; puir bit things, I pity them—a' walkin by themsels, rank and file, twa deep, the feck o' them geyan sickly, and greenin for hame—But no to purshue that eemage —what was you beginnin till abuse, sir, when I interruppit you about the misses?

North. Mr Moore's Homily on Husbands.

Shepherd. He says — "The truth is, I fear, that rarely, if ever, have men of the higher order of genius shown themselves fitted for the calm affections and comforts that form the cement of domestic life." Hoots — toots! Toots — hoots! Hoots—hoots! Toots—toots!

North. You are severe, James, but your strictures are just.

Shepherd. The warst apothegm that ever was kittled in the shape o' a paradox; and then, sir, the expression's as puir's the thocht. The calm affections—if by them Mr Muir means a' the great natural affections, and he can mean naething else —are no the "cement" merely o' domestic life, but they are its Sowl, its Essence, its Being, Itsel! Cement's a sort o' lime or slime——

North. I should not quarrel with the words, James, if their meaning——

Shepherd. But I do quarrel wi' the words, sir, and they deserve to hae their noses pu'd for leears. I recolleck the passage perfeckly weel, and it's as easy to rend it intil flinders, as to tear to rags a rotten blanket left by some gypsey on a nyuck by the roadside. Tak you the byuck, sir—for you're

[1] *Skrow*—number, swarm.

amaist as gude an elecutionist as Mr Knowles himsel. You're twa natural readers—wi' a' your art—therein you're about equal—but in action and gesture, sir, he beats you sair.

North. "However delightful may be the spectacle of a man of genius, tamed and domesticated in society, taking docilely upon him the yoke of the social ties, and enlightening, without disturbing, the sphere in which he moves, we must, nevertheless, in the midst of our admiration, bear in mind that it is not thus smoothly or amiably immortality has been ever struggled for, or won. The poet thus circumstanced, may be popular, be loved; for the happiness of himself, and those linked with him, he is in the right road—but not for greatness. The marks by which Fame has always separated her great martyrs from the rest of mankind, are not upon him, and the crown cannot be his. He may dazzle, may captivate the circle, and even the times in which he lives, but he is not for hereafter!"

Shepherd. What infernal folly's that ye're talkin, sir? I wuss ye mayna hae been drinkin in the forenoon ower mony o' thae wicked wee glasses o' noyau, or sherry-brandy, or ither leccures in confectionary chops, and that's the effecks o't breakin out upon you the noo, sae sune after the paws, in a heap o' havers, just like a verra rash on the face o' a patient in the measles. Eh?

North. The words are Mr Moore's. My memory, James, is far from being tenacious, yet sentences of extreme absurdity will stick to it——

Shepherd. Like plaguy burs to the tails o' a body's coat walkin through a spring wood, alive wi' sweet-singing birds, and sweet-smelling flowers, whase balm and beauty's amaist a' forgotten as sune's he comes out again into the open every-day warld, and appear faint and far off, like an unassured dream, while thae confounded realities, the burs, are stickin as if they had been shued on by the tailor, or rather incorporated by the wicked weaver wi' the verra original wab o' the claith, sae that ye canna get rid o' the inextricable cleggs, without clipping the bit out wi' the shears, or ruggin them aff angrily wi' baith hauns, as if they were sae mony waur than useless buttons.

North. An apt and a picturesque illustration. When Mr Moore speaks of the spectacle of a man of genius "tamed and domesticated in society," he must have been thinking——

Shepherd. O' the lauchin hyena.

North. No, James, not the laughing hyena, for he adds, "taking docilely upon him the yoke of the social ties;" and, I believe, neither the laughing nor the weeping hyena—neither the Democritus nor the Heraclitus of the tribe—has ever been made to submit his shoulders to the yoke—nor, indeed, have I ever heard of any attempt having been made to put him into harness.

Shepherd. Mr Muir's been thinkin o' the Zebra, or the Quagga, sir.

North. But then, James, he goes on to say forthwith, "and enlightening, without disturbing, the sphere in which he moves."

Shepherd. Ay, there Mr Muir forgets the kind o' animal he set out wi', and whether he was a lauchin hyena, as I first surmeesed, or a zebra, or quagga, why, by a slip o' the memory or the imagination, he's transmogrified either intil a star or a watchman, "enlightening, without disturbing, the sphere in which he moves,"—maist probably a star; for a watchman does disturb "the sphere in which he moves," by ever and anon crawin out something about the hour—at least folk hae telt me that it's about the hour, and the divisions o' the hour, that the unhappy somnambulists are scrauching;—whereas, as to enlightening the sphere which he disturbs, what can you expeck, sir, frae a fardin cawnle? It maun be a star, sir, that Mr Muir means. Tak ma word for't, sir, it's a star.

North. But, James, Mr Moore adds, "that it is not thus smoothly or amiably immortality has been ever struggled for or won."

Shepherd. There again, sir, you see the same sort o' slip o' the memory or the imagination; sae that, no to be severe, the haill sentence is mair like the maunderin o' an auld wife, sittin half asleep and half paralectic, and aiblins rather a bit wee fou frae a chance drappie, at the ingle-cheek, lecturin the weans how to behave theirsels, and mair especially that nae gude's ever likely to come either frae reading or writing ungodly ballants, like them o' Bobby Burns——

North. Or Jamie Hogg——

Shepherd. Just sae, sir;—for that, as she hersel cam to ken by cruel experience, it a' "ends in houghmagandy!"[1]

[1] "And mony jobs that day begin
May end in houghmagandy
Some ither day."—BURNS'S *Holy Fair.*

North. I fear, James, the star won't do either. For Mr Moore inditeth, that "for the happiness of himself [the Poet aforesaid] and those linked with him, he is on the right road," which is not the language men use in speaking of a star, or even a constellation. And in the sentence that follows, he is again a good Christian; but not one of "the great martyrs separated by Fame from the rest of mankind," as may be known from her "marks not being to be found upon him" (he is no witch, James), and from the want of a crown on his temples. Still, whether a laughing hyena, a zebra, a quagga, a star, or a watchman, he "may dazzle," Mr Moore tells us, "may captivate the circle, and even the TIMES in which he lives [Mr Moore himself, I believe, does so,] but he is not for hereafter;" and this, James, is a specimen of fine writing in the philosophy of human life!

Shepherd. O hoch! hoch! hoch! O hoch! hoch! hoch!

North. You are not ill, my dear James?

Shepherd. Just rather a wee qualmish, sir. I can stamack as strang nonsense as maist men; but then there's a peculiar sort o' wersh fushionless nonsense that's gotten a sweaty sweetishness about it, no unlike the taste o' the puirest imaginable frost-bitten parsnip eaten alang wi' yesterday's sowens, to some dregs dribbled out o' an auld treacle-bottle that has been staunnin a' the season on the window-sole catchin flees—that I confess does mak me fin' as gin I was gaun to boek.[1] That sentence is a sample o't—sae here's to you, you Prince o' Jugglers.—Oh! but that's the best you hae brew'd these fifty years, and drinks like something no made by the skill o' man, but by the instinck o' an animal, like hinny by bees. We maun hain[2] this Jug, sir; for there'll never be the marrow[3] o't on this earth, were you to leeve till the age o' Methuselah, and mak a jug every hour, till you become a Defunk.

North. Tolerable tipple.—Besides, James, how can Mr Moore pretend to lay down an essential distinction between the character of those men of genius, who are born to delight the circle in which they move, and to be at once good authors and good men, delightful poets and admirable husbands, and those who are born to win a crown of immortality as bards, and as Benedicts to go to the devil?

Shepherd. Na. You may ask that wi' a pig's tail in your cheek.

[1] *Boek*—vomit. [2] *Hain*—husband. [3] *Marrow*—match, equal.

North. With a pig's tail in my cheek! What is the meaning and origin, pray, of that expression?

Shepherd. A pig's tail's a quod o' tobacco.

North. Oh!—According to this creed, Poets born to delight their circles must always be trembling on the brink of marriage misery.

Shepherd. And mony o' them tummle ower, even according to Mr Muir's ain theorem. For the difference—if there be ony—can only be a difference o' degree—Sae wha's safe?

North. Pope, it seems, once said, that to follow poetry, as one ought, "one must forget father and mother, and cleave to it alone." This was not very reverent in Pope, perhaps a little impious or so — at all events not a little self-conceited; but while it might be permitted to pass without blame, or even notice, among the many clever things so assiduously set down in Pope's letters, it must be treated otherwise when brought forward formally by a brother bard to corroborate a weak and worthless argument on the nature of genius and virtue, by which he would endeavour to prove that they are hostile and repugnant.

Shepherd. I aye pity Pop.

North. In these few words is pointed out, says Mr Moore, "the sole path that leads genius to greatness. On such terms alone are the high places of fame to be won — nothing less than the sacrifice of the entire man can achieve them!"

Shepherd. Sae to be a great poet, a man maun forget—bonny-feedy forget—mind no in the Scriptural sense, for o' that neither Pop nor Muir seem to hae had ony recollection, or aiblins they would hae qualified the observe, or omitted it—father and mother, sisters and brothers, freens and sweethearts, wife and weans, and then, after havin obleeterated their verra names frae the tablets o' his memory, he is to sit doun and write a poem worthy an immortal crown! Oh the sinner! the puir, paltry, pitifu', contemptible, weak, worthless, shamefu', shameless, sowlless, heartless, unprincipled, and impious atheist o' a sinner, for to pretend, for the length o' time necessar to the mendin the slit in the neb o' his pen, to forget a' that—and be a—Poet.

North. James—James—James—be moderate——

Shepherd. I'll no be moderate, sir. A' sorts o' moderation hae lang been ma abhorrence. I hate the verra word — and,

for the year being, I aye dislike the minister that's the Moderator o' the General Assembly.

North. But be merciful on Mr Moore, James. Do not extinguish altogether the author of *Lalla Rookh.*

Shepherd. I wadna extinguish, sir, the maist minute cretur in the shape o' a poet, that ever twinkled, like a wee bit tiny inseck in the summer sun. I wad rather put ma haun intil the fire, sir, than to claught[1] a single ane o' the creturs in ma nieve,[2] as ane might a butterfly wi' its beautifu' wings expanded, wavering or steadfast in the air or on a flower, and crush his mealy mottledness intil annihilation. Na—na—let the bit variegated ephemeral dance his day—his hour—shinin in his ain colours sae multifarious and so bonny blent, as if he had drapt doun alang wi' the laverock frae the rainbow.

North. What? Thomas Moore!

Shepherd. I'm no speakin the noo o' Tammas Muir—except by anither kind o' implication. Sin' I wadna harm a hair on the gaudy wings o' an ephemeral, surely I wadna pu' a feather frae them o' ane o' the Immortals.

North. Beautiful—James.

Shepherd. Mr Muir's a true poet, sir. But true poet though he be, he maunna be alloo'd to publish pernicious nonsense in prose about Poets and Poetry, without gettin't across the knuckles till baith his twa hauns be as numb as lead. Let you and me convict him o' nonsense by the Socratic method. Begin the Sorites, sir.

North. The Sorites, James! A good Poet must be a good man—a great Poet must be a great man.

Shepherd. Is the law universal in nature?

North. It is, and without exception. But sin steals or storms its way into all human hearts — and then farewell to the grander achievements either of genius or virtue.

Shepherd. A man canna imagine a' the highest and holiest affections o' the heart, without having felt them in the core—can he, sir?

North. No.

Shepherd. A man, therefore, maun hae felt a' that man ought to feel, afore he——

North. Yes.

Shepherd. Can what?

[1] *To claught*—to have clutched. [2] *Nieve*—fist.

North. Can be enrolled among the

"Phœbo digna locuti!"

Shepherd. But can a man who has ance enjoyed the holiest affections o' natur, in his ain heart, ever cease to cherish them in its inmost recesses?

North. Never.

Shepherd. But is it possible to cherish them far apart, and aloof frae their natural objects?

North. Impossible.

Shepherd. But can they be cherished, even amang their natural objects, without being brocht into active movement towards them, without cleaving to them, as you may see bees cleaving to the flowers as they keep sook, sookin intil their verra hearts?

North. They cannot.

Shepherd. Then Mr Muir's dished. For colleck a' thae premises, inferences, conclusions, admissions, axioms, propositions, corollaries, maxims, and apothegms intil ae GREAT TRUTH, and in it, beside a thousan' ithers, will be found this ane——

North. "The sacrifice o' the entire man is the sacrifice o' the entire poet."

Shepherd. Or, in other words, the man withouten a human heart, humanly warmed by the human affections, may as weel think o' becoming a poet, as a docken a sunflower. Mr Muir's dished.

North. Mr Moore forgets, that without the practice of virtue, virtue—

"Languishes, grows dim, and dies;"

and that, without the indulgence of action, so do the highest and holiest feelings; so that the poet who neglects, disregards, shuns, or violates the duties of life, is forsaken of inspiration, and dies a suicide.

Shepherd. Ony mair nonsense o' Mr Muir's?

North. Lots.

Shepherd. But what's that paper-ba' that you're aye keepin rowin atween your fore-finger and your thoom?

North. Let me unroll it, and see—why, it's something quizzical.

Shepherd. Fling't ower. Let's receete it.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL IN HONOUR OF MAGA.

SUNG BY THE CONTRIBUTORS.

Noo—hearken till me—and I'll beat Mathews or Yates a' to sticks wi my impersonations.

Tickler.

When Kit North is dead,
What will Maga do, sir?
She must go to bed,
And like him die too, sir!
Fal de ral, de ral,
Iram coram dago;
Fal de ral, de ral,
Here's success to Maga!

Timothy depicteth the consequences of North's death to Maga.

Chorus, in which the whole company joineth.

Shepherd.

When death has them flat,
I'll stitch on my weepers,
Put crape around my hat,
And a napkin to my peepers!
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

The Shepherd waxeth melancholy, and wipeth his sky-lights.

North.

Your words go to my heart,
I hear the death-owl flying,
I feel death's fatal dart—
By jingo, I am dying!
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

North apprehendeth death and falleth down in a swoon.

Colonel O'Shaughnessy.[1]

See him how he lies
Flat as any flounder!
Blow me! smoke his eyes—
Death ne'er closed eyes sounder!
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

The Colonel describeth the appearance of Kit.

Delta.

Yet he can't be dead,
For he is immortal,
And to receive his head
Earth would not ope its portal!
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

Delta declareth him immortal.

[1] For *Colonel O'Shaughnessy* see two articles in *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xxi., written by Dr Macnish.

Odoherty.

Kit will never die ;
That I take for *sartain !*
Death "is all my eye"—
An't it, Betty Martin ?
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

Odoherty declareth death to be all in his eye.

Modern Pythagorean.[1]

Suppose we feel his arm—
Zounds ! I never felt a
Human pulse more firm :
What's your opinion, Delta ?
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

The Pythagorean feeleth his pulse and giveth a favourable prognosis.

Charles Lamb.

Kit, I hope you're well,
Up, and join our ditty ;
To lose such a fine old fel-
Low would be a pity !
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

Charles hopeth Kit is well, and adviseth him to get up and sing.

North.

Let's resume our booze,
And tipple while we're able ;
I've had a bit of a snooze,
And feel quite comfortable !
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

North awaketh from his swoon and singeth.

Mullion.

Be he who he may,
Sultan, Czar, or Aga,
Let him soak his clay
To the health of Kit and Maga !
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

Mullion adviseth all men to drink to Kit and Maga.

Opium-Eater.

Search all the world around,
From Greenland to Malaga,
And nowhere will be found
A magazine like Maga !
Fal de ral, de ral, &c.

The Opium-Eater declareth Maga to be matchless.

[1] Dr Macnish, the author of *The Anatomy of Drunkenness* and *The Philosophy of Sleep*, wrote several articles in *Blackwood's Magazine* under the signature of "A Modern Pythagorean." He practised as a physician in Glasgow, where he died in 1837.

North. Admirable impersonations! The faculty of imitation always belongs, in excess, to original minds.

Shepherd. Does't?

North. Mimicry is the farthest thing in the wide world from imitation.

Shepherd. Na. No the farthest thing in the wide warld, sir; but I cheerfully grant that a man may be a mere mime and nae imitawtor. I'm baith.

North. And besides, an original.

Shepherd. At Mister Muir again, sir, tooth and nail!

North. "The very habits of abstraction and self-study to which the occupations of men of genius lead, are in themselves necessarily of an unsocial and detaching tendency, and require a large portion of allowance and tolerance not to be set down as unamiable." So argueth Mr Moore, and that is another reason why men of genius are not "fitted for the calm affections and comforts that form the cement of domestic life."

Shepherd. I howp, sir, there's no muckle truth in that, although it soun's like a sort o' vague pheelosophy. Demolish't.

North. The habits of abstraction and self-study, of which Mr Moore here speaks, are those of the poet. Now, so far from being, in themselves, necessarily of an unsocial and detaching tendency, they are pervaded by sympathy with all that breathes; and were that sympathy to die, so would the abstraction and self-study of the poet. True, that they seek and need seclusion from cark and care; and sometimes—say often—even from the common ongoings of domestic life. But what then? Do not all professions and pursuits in this life do the same?

Shepherd. Ay, ye may weel ask that! A lawyer routin hours every day at the bar, and then dictatin papers or opinions a' afternoon, evening, and nicht, on to past his natural bed-time—are his habits, pray, "better fitted for the calm affections and comforts that form the cement of domestic life," than them that's natural to the poet?

North. I should think not, James. They are very different from those of the poet—but much more disagreeable, and requiring, again to use Mr Moore's words, a large "portion of allowance and tolerance not to be set down as unamiable."

Shepherd. Yet amaist a' the lawyers I ken in the Parliament

House[1] are excellent domestic characters,—that is to say, far frae being the dour deevils you wad suppose aforehaun' frae hearin them gullerin at the bar, and flytin on ane anither like sae mony randies.[2] Gin they can fling aff the growl wi' the goun, and frae lawyers become men, mayna poets far mair easily and successfully do the same?

North. Undoubtedly, James. You might instance, in like manner, physicians and clergymen——

Shepherd. Ay, the classes that profess to tak especial care o' our twa pairts, the body and the sowl. Hoo profoun', sir, ocht to be their self-study, and their study o' ither folk! Physicians, ane micht think, seein folk deein nicht and day, in a' manner o' agonies, and bein' accustomed to pocket fees by the death-bed-side, would become, in the core o' their hearts, as callous as custocks;[3] and I shanna say that some o' them do not——

North. Most eminent physicians are good men; and, what is better, pleasant men——

Shepherd. What? Is't better to be pleasant than good?

North. Yes, James, for our present argument. According to Mr Moore, they, too, ought "to require a larger portion of allowance and tolerance, not to be set down as unamiable."

Shepherd. Then the clergy, again, were they to devote theirsels, tooth and nail, to their manifold duties, ane micht argue that they would hae time neither to sleep nor eat, nor attend to the ither common comforts and affections that form the cement of domestic life. Yet the clergy are far frae being a very immoral, irreligious, or home-hating class of people; and manses are amazingly crowded wi' weans, sir, on the very sma'est steepens——

North. Why, certainly, according to Mr Moore's argument, a deep divine, engaged on some great theological work, would make but an indifferent husband. But look at him, James—yes, look at our Dr Wodrow——

Shepherd. And look, I beseech you, at his pew o' weans.

North. All the most distinguished poets of the age in Britain, are either middle-aged, or elderly, or old gentlemen. They are, therefore, not at all dangerous, personally, to the

[1] The Parliament House in Edinburgh corresponds to Westminster Hall in London.

[2] *Randies*—scolding women.

[3] *Custocks*—stalks of colewort.

fair sex—Cupid sneers at them—Venus jeers—and Hymen weeps, like a crocodile, with his hands in his breeches pockets.

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw!

North. Breathe the tender passion as they may, not a young lady in the land who would not prefer to the best of them, any undeformed ensign in a marching regiment, either of the foot or the dragoons.

Shepherd. The sex has been aye desperate fond o' the army.

North. It is fortunate for some of the old bards that they have wives. Crabbe, Bowles, Wordsworth, Southey, Moore, and others—fourscore—threescore-and-ten—and threescore—have long been happily provided with that leading article. So are Milman and Barry Cornwall, and most of "the rest" between forty and fifty; two or three are widowers—and the remainder likely to remain bachelors for life. Not a female bosom beats, with a pulsation worthy the name of beating, at this moment, for any British bard.

Shepherd. I'm no sae sure o' that, sir. But prate awa.

North. The sex regard all the bachelors as so many old foggies[1]—as so many uncles; and the idea would be too much for the gravity of any of the dear creatures, of the celebration of her marriage rites with the prettiest and most popular poet, seeing that he is aged, either by a bishop or a blacksmith.

Shepherd. Prate awa, sir—prate awa.

North. The truth is, that, in modern times at least, poets, whatever their time of life, have been held rather cheap by the fair sex. I suspect it was the same in the ancient world—and in the days of chivalry and romance, singing certainly was less esteemed by young ladies than fighting, and a poet with his pen had no chance whatever against a knight with his lance.

Shepherd. Prate awa, sir—prate awa.

North. There are reasons for all this lying deep in human nature.

Shepherd. Lying deep in human nature! Doun wi' the bucket, and then roun' wi' the windlass, and up wi't again fu' o' the clear waters frae the well o' truth.

North. Making love, and making love-verses, are two of the most different things in the world; and I doubt if both accomplishments were ever found highly united in the same gifted individual. Few Irishmen, in the first, excel Tom Moore; in

[1] *Foggie*—properly an invalid soldier; generally, a drone.

the second, millions. Lord Byron, in lyrical measures, was a formidable wooer; but in plain matter-of-fact courtship, he had to stoop his anointed head to Corporal Casey.

Shepherd. Wha was he?

North. Apollo himself, god though he was of light, and music, and medicine, setting aside two or three trivial amours, was a harmless sort of a body; while there were other deities who could not have tagged together two rhymes, before whom goddesses and nymphs fell flat as flounders.

Shepherd. Prate awa, sir—prate awa.

North. Inspiration, in short, is of little avail either to gods or men in the most interesting affairs of life—those of the heart. To push your way in them, there is nothing, in the long-run, like good plain prose. Now, though it must be granted that, in much that passes for poetry, there is no inconsiderable mixture of that useful commodity, yet it is so diluted as no longer to be strong drink; and repeated doses of it administered to a maiden in the shade, fail to produce the desired effect—the intoxication of love. The pretty dear seems to sip the philtre kindly; and the poet doubts not that she is about to fall into his arms. But she merely

"Kisses the cup, and passes it to the rest,"

and next morning, perhaps, is off before breakfast in a chaise-and-four to Gretna Green, with an aide-de-camp of Wellington, as destitute of imagination as his master.

Shepherd. Prate awa, sir—prate awa.

North. If such have been often the fate even of young bards—and Sir Walter, with his usual knowledge of human nature, has charmingly illustrated it in the story of Wilford[1]—how much more to be pitied must they be, who have served the Muses, till the crow-feet are blackening below their eyes, and who are labouring under symptoms, not to be concealed, of incipient pot-bellies!

Shepherd. Let's return to the smashin o' Mister Muir.

North. There is no need to knock the nail on the head any longer with our sledge-hammers, James. Yet I cannot help expressing my wonder at the confusion of Mr Moore's ideas, as well as at the weakness of his argument. He wishes to prove, that "men of the higher order of genius" are seldom

[1] See Scott's *Rokeby*.

good domestic characters; and yet he huddles and jumbles them all together,—poets, philosophers, and so forth,—making his reasoning the most miscellaneous and heterogeneous hotch-potch that ever was set down on a table.

Shepherd. Are you dune wi' cuttin him up, or only gaun to begin?

North. I am somewhere about the middle, James.

Shepherd. Ony mair bear-paws in the house, think ye, sir?

North. To prove that men of the higher order of genius—no matter what kind—are unfitted for the calm affections and comforts that form the cement of domestic life, Mr Moore observes, that "one of the chief causes of sympathy and society between ordinary mortals being their dependence on each other's intellectual resources, the operation of this social principle must naturally be weakened in those whose own mental stores are most abundant and self-sufficing, and who, rich in such materials for thinking within themselves, are rendered so far independent of the external world."

Shepherd. Would you repeat that again, sir, for it soun's sae sonorous, that the words droon the ideas? 'Tis like the murmur o' a bit waterfa', or a hive o' bees, which the indolent mind loves to listen to, and at times amaist deludes itsel intil the belief that there's a meanin in the murmur—as if the stream soleeloqueezed and the insects decalogueezed wisdom in the desert. Would you repeat that again, sir?

North. Be shot if I do. Why, James, all that is——

Shepherd. Drivel. Dungeons o' learning there are—leevin dungeons o' dead learning—in wham the operation o' the social principle is weak indeed—less than the life that's in a mussel. The servant lass has to gang in upon him in his study, and rug him aff his chair by the cuff o' the neck, when the kail's on the table, and the family hae gien the first preliminary flourish o' the horn-spoons.

North. Picture drawn from the life.

Shepherd. Aiblins. But "men o' the higher order o' genius," sir, I mainteen, are in general impatient o' solitude, though dearly do they love it; and sae far frae their mental stores being abundant and self-sufficing, why, the mair abundant they are, the less are they self-sufficing; for the owners, "rich in such materials for thinking within themsels," would think and feel that they were in a worse condition than that

o' the maist abjeck poverty and powperism, gin they werena driven by a sense and an instinck, fierce and furious aften as a fivver, to pour their pearls, and their jewels, and their diamonds, and their gold and silver, out in great glitterin heaps afore the astonished, startled, and dazed een o' their fellow-creatures less prodigally endowed by nature, and then wi' a strange mixture o' pride and humbleness, to mark the sudden effeck on the gazers,—inwardly exclaiming, "I did it!"

North. Did what?

Shepherd. Why, by inspiring them with a sense of beauty, elevated their haill moral and intellectual being, and enabled their fellow-creatures to see farther into their ain hearts, and into the heart o' the haill creation!

North. Good, James, good. But to pitch our conversation on a lower key, allow me to say, that "thinking within themselves," when too long pursued, is of all employments the most wearisome and barren to which men can have recourse—and that "men of the higher order of genius," knowing that well, so far from feeling that they "are independent of the external world," draw thence their daily bread, and their daily water, without which their souls would speedily perish of inanition.

Shepherd. Ca' ye that pitchin your talk on a laigh key? It's at the tap o' the gawmut.

North. The materials for thinking within ourselves are gathered from without; in the gathering, we have enjoyed all varieties of delight; and is it to be thought that the gardens where these flowers grew, and still are growing, are to be forsaken by us, after we have, during a certain number of seasons, culled garlands wherewith to adorn our foreheads, or plucked fruit wherewith to sustain and refresh our souls?

Shepherd. Ca' ye that pitchin your talk on a laigh key, sir? It's at the tap o' the gawmut.

North. No, James—Men of the higher order of genius never long forsake the Life-Region, and is not its great Central Shrine, James, the Hearth? The soul that worships not there, my dear Shepherd—and true worship cannot be unfrequent, but is perennial, because from a source that the dews of heaven will not let run dry—will falter, fail, and faint in the midst of its song, and will know, ere that truth invades, one after another, its many chambers, that the wing that soareth highest in the sun must have slowly waxed in the shade——

Shepherd. Ca' ye that pitchin your talk on a laigh key? It's at the tap o' the gawmut.

North. That the Bird of Jove, sun-starer and cloud-cleaver though he be——

Shepherd. Storm-lover——

North. Glorying in the storm, and enamoured of the tempest——

Shepherd. Yet is happy to sink doun frae heaven, and fauld up his magnificent wings at the edge o' his eyry, fond o' the twa unfledged cannibals sleepin wi' fu' stammacks there, cosy in the middle o' a mighty nest, twenty feet in circumference, and covering the haill platform o' the tap o' the cliff, ay, as fond, sir, though I alloo a hantle fiercer, as ony cushie-doo on her slight and slender "procreant cradle,"—you can see through't, ye ken, sir, frae below, and discern whether she hae eggs or young anes,—in the green gloom o' some auld pine central in the forest.

North. Yes, James, all great poets are great talkers——

Shepherd. Tiresome aften to a degree—though sometimes, I grant to Mr Muir, that they are a sulky set, and as gruffly and grimly silent as if they had the toothache, or something the matter wi' their inside. Far be it frae me to deny, that "men o' the higher order o' genius" are aften disagreeable deevils. They maun aften be a sair fash[1] to their wives and their weans—and calm as the poet's cottage looks, upon the hill or in the dell, mony a rippet[2] is there, sir, beyond the power o' the imagination o' ony mere proser to conceive. Ou ay, sir! mony a fearfu' rippet, in which, whether appellant or respondent, defender or pursuer, the "man o' the higher order o' genius" wishes, wi' tears in the red een o' him, no that his wife and weans were a' dead and buried—for nae provocation in their power can drive the distrackit fallow to that—but that he himsel had never been kittled, or, if kittled, instead o' ha'in been laid in the cradle by Apollo, and tended on by the Muses—nine nurses, and nae less—which o' them wat and which o' them dry it's no easy for me at this distance o' time to remember—he had been sookled like ither honest men's bairns, at the breist o' his nain[3] mither, had shown nae precocious genius in his leading-strings,—but, blessed lot! had died booby o' the lowest form, and been buried amang

[1] *Fash*—trouble. [2] *Rippet*—disturbance. [3] *Nain*—own.

the sabs o' a' that ever saw him, a wee senseless sumph, as stupid as a piggie, yet as happy as a lamb!

North. Hee! hee! hee! James!

Shepherd. But what then?

North. Yes, James, what then?

Shepherd. Eh?

North. Hem!

Shepherd. Ay, clear your throttle. You've gotten a vile crinklin cough, sir,—a short, kirkyard cough, sir—a wheezy host, sir—an asthmatic——

North. Poo! It has teazed me a little for these last fifty years——

Shepherd. What? Hae ye carried a spale-box o' lozenges since the auchty? Recover your wund, sir—while I chant a stave.

KING WILLIE.

O, Willie was a wanton wag,
The blithest lad that e'er I saw;
He 'mang the lassies bure the brag,[1]
An' carried aye the gree[2] awa.
An' wasna Willie weel worth goud?
When seas did row an' winds did blaw
An' battle's deadly stour was blent,
He fought the foremost o' them a'.

Wha hasna heard o' Willie's fame,
The rose o' Britain's topmast bough,
Wha never stain'd his gallant name,
Nor turned his back on friend or foe.
An' he could tak a rantin glass,
An' he could chant a cheery strain,
An' he could kiss a bonny lass,
An' aye be welcome back again.

Though now he wears the British crown—
For whilk he never cared a flee—
Yet still the downright honest tar,
The same kind-hearted chiel is he.
An' every night I fill my glass—
An' fill it reaming to the brim,
An' drink it in a glowing health
To Adie Laidlaw an' to him.

[1] *Bure the brag*—wore the palm. [2] *Gree*—prize.

I've ae advice to gie my King,
An' that I'll gie wi' right good-will,
Stick by the auld friends o' the crown,
Wha bore it up through good and ill:
For new-made friends an' new-made laws,
They suit nae honest hearts ava;
An' Royal Willie's worth I'll sing
As lang as I hae breath to draw.

North. Spirited. Who is Adie Laidlaw?

Shepherd. Queen Adelaide—a familiar title o' endearment the Queen enjoys in the Forest.

North. But what say you to the last stanza—*now*, James?

Shepherd. Wait a while—sir.

North. I am delighted to hear that Mr Blackwood is about to publish a volume of your inimitable Songs.[1] 'Twill be universally popular, my dear James—and must be followed by a second in spring. The wing of your lyrical muse never flags, whether she skim the gowans or brush the clouds. The shade of Burns himself might say to the Shepherd, "Then gie's your haund, my trusty feer," for, of all the song-writers of Scotland, you two are the best—though Allan Cunningham treads close upon your heels—and often is privileged to form a trio—such a trio of peasant bards as may challenge the whole world.

Shepherd. Your haun, sir. I could amaist greet.

North. But it is the "cultivation and exercise of the imaginative faculty," quoth Mr Moore, "that, more than anything else, tends to wean the man of genius from actual life, and by substituting the sensibilities of the imagination for those of the heart, to render, at last, the medium through which he feels no less unreal than that through which he thinks. Those images of ideal good and beauty that surround him in his musings, soon accustom him to consider all that is beneath this high standard unworthy of his care; till, at length, the heart becoming chilled, in proportion as he has refined and elevated his theory of all the social affections, he has unfitted himself for the practice of them." Such are the *ipsissima verba* of Mr Moore, James.

Shepherd. I'm nae great reader o' byucks, sir, as you weel

[1] Hogg's songs were published in 1831, and very admirable many of them are.

ken, and, I believe, dinna disapprove, yet mony's the time and aft that I've lauched to peruse that apothegm.

North. If not a "wise saw," perhaps 'tis a "modern instance."

Shepherd. Mr North, if Mr Muir was sittin on that empty chair there, wi' the laddie kissin the lassie embroidered on the inside o' the back o't — Patie and Roger, I jalouse — I would just say till him, wi' a pleesant vice, and kind een, and a lauch about my mouth, — Mister Muir, you're under a great mistak. Nae man o' a high order o' mind, either thinks or feels through "an unreal medium." But I'll tell you, sir, what he does—he thinks and feels through a *fine* medium. He breathes the *pure* air o' the mountain-tap—and he sees through the *clear* air a' the dwallins o' man — and richt through their roofs intil their hearths and their hearts. Did Burns feel and think through an unreal medium, Mister Muir, when—

> "In glory and in joy,
> Following his plough upon the mountain-side,"

his soul saw the Cottar's Saturday Night, and in words gave the vision imperishable life?

North. James—

> "You are attired
> With sudden brightness, like a man inspired."

Shepherd. Na, na — 'tis but the glow o' the fire on ma face. Yet ma heart's a' on a low — for as sure as God is in heaven, and that he has gien us his word on earth, that Picture is a Picture of the Truth, and Burns, in drawing it, saw, felt, and thocht through that *real medium*, in which alone all that is fairest, loveliest, brichtest, best in creation, is made apparent to the eyes o' genius, or permanent in its immortal works.

North. Ca' ye that pitchin your talk on a laigh key? 'Tis at the tap o' the gawmut.

Shepherd. Hoo can you, Mister Muir, sit there and tell me that men o' a high order o' mind sune get sae enamoured o' the eemages o' ideal good and beauty, that they consider all that is beneath that standard unworthy o' their care? Let me come ower and sit beside you for a few minutes. There,

dinna be feared — I'm no a grain angry — and I'm sittin, you see, my dear sir, wi' my airm ower the back o' your chair.

North. Don't press so close upon Mr Moore, James——

Shepherd. Mister Muir's makin nae complents, sir. — It is "men o' a *laigh*[1] order o' genius," ma freen, that is subject to sic degeneracy and adulteration. A puny, sickly, sensibility there is, which is averse frae all the realities of life; and Byron or somebody else spoke well when he said that Sterne preferred whining ower a dead ass to relieving a living mother! But wha was Sterne? As shallow a sentimentalist as ever grat — or rather tried to greet. O, sir! but it's a degrawdin sicht to humanity, yon—to see the shufflin sinner tryin to bring the tears intil his een, by rubbin the lids wi' the pint o' his pen, or wi' the feathers on the shank, and when it a' winna do, takin refuge in a blank, sae ——, or hidin his head amang a set o' asterisks, sae * * * *; or boltin aff the printed page a'thegither, and disappearin in ae black blotch!

North. Sterne had genius, James.

Shepherd. No ae grain, sir.

North. Some—not a little——

Shepherd. Weel, weel — be it sae — a' that I mean to aver is, that had he been "o' the first order o' minds," he would not hae preferred whining ower a dead ass to relieving a living mother; but if news had been suddenly brocht to him that his mother was ill, he wad hae hired a livin horse, and aff to her house like a flash o' lichtnin, flingin himsel out o' the saiddle to the danger o' his neck, up-stairs to her bedside, and doun upon his knees, beseeching God for her recovery, and willing to die for her sake, so that she who gave him birth micht yet live, nor be taken from the licht of day and buried amang the tombs!

North. Don't press, my dear James, so heavily on Mr Moore's shoulder.

Shepherd. Mister Muir's makin nae complents.—There's mysel, sirs—I shanna pretend to say whether I'm a man o' the higher order o' genius or no; but——

North. Yes, James, you are; for you wrote *Kilmeny*.

Shepherd. But if I haena ten thousand times the quantity o' genius that ever Sterne had, may this be the last jug, sirs, that ever we three drink thegither——

[1] *Laigh*—low.

North. Shades of my Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim!

Shepherd. Fantastic phantoms![1]

North. Why, James, your voice trembles with emotion. You are not the man, my boy, to whine over a dead ass; but you are the man, my boy, to be pensive over the very fear, however unfounded, of an empty jug—so I may replenish?

Shepherd. Do sae. — I am surrounded in my musings — to use your ain words, Mister Muir — wi' images o' ideal good and beauty; and at times, when lyin on the greensward in the heart o' the Forest, a sweet strange perplexity has it been to the Shepherd, sirs, to determine within the consciousness o' his ain sowl, whether the bonny creturs that seemed to come to him in solitude, were creturs o' this earth or no—and if o' this earth, then whether they were all but Fancy's phantoms, or beings that had their abiding-place in heaven, and cam o' their ain accord; or were sent to wave peace into my wearied spirit frae the white motions o' their arms celestial in their whiteness as the blue lights of love and pity, that bathed in ineffable beautifulness the steadfast expression of their angelic eyes!

North. My dear James!

Shepherd. But did these visitations accustom me, sir,—I'm speakin to you, Mister Muir,—to consider a' else unworthy o' my care? Na, na, na. I appeal to you, Mr North, for you hae seen me and the auld man thegither there, gin I didna return back to my ain hut, anxious as ever about my father, wha used then to sit warmin himsel at the bit ingle, stricken in years, though far frae frail yet, and aften glowerin at me wi' that *gash* kind o' face that somehoo or ither in verra auld folk carries ane's thochts at ance to their coffin and their grave—as anxious about him as if the breathins o' genie had never visited the Shepherd on the hill, and I had been only a mere common ordinar prose-hash o' a chiel, whase heichest explite in leeteratur had been a rejected agricultural report to the *Kelso Mail*, on the fly in turnips, or the smut in wheat.

North. You tended the old man most filially, James, till the last sugh——

[1] A stronger protest than North's *must* here be entered against the heterodoxy of the Shepherd. Whatever may have been the infamy of Sterne's life and character, his Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim are, beyond all question, two of the most exquisite creations that genius ever sent forth to gladden the hearts of mankind.

Shepherd. Nor did I forget ma mither either, sir; though, thank God, she never needed but sma' assistance frae me, for "poortith cauld" was never her lot, sir, though the necessaries o' life were a' she ever had;—and as for its luxuries—gin you except a dish o' strang tea, and noo and than a whiff o' bacca—for she was nae regular smoker—she had a speerit aboon them a', sir; and had the deevil tempted her even in a dream, when sometimes ane's sowl seems to lose its nature, wi' the shadows o' a' the eatables and drinkables that his wild warlockry could hae conjured up, hoo she would hae strauchened hersel up to her haill hicht, and, wi' a smile far prooder and sterner than his ain froon, hae sent Satan and a' his visionary viands awa back to the regions o' everlastin dolour and despair.

North. She was a stately old lady.

Shepherd. Wha was?

North. Your mother.

Shepherd. Wha was speakin about ma mither?

North. Why, yourself, James.

Shepherd. Ou ay, sae I was. But my imagination, sir, a' at ance wafted me awa intil the laneliest spat amang a' the hills whare my childhood played—and amang the broom-bushes and the brackens there, I was beginnin, when you reca'd me by that rap on the table, to sink awa back again intil the dream o' dreams!

North. The dream o' dreams?

Shepherd. Ay, sir—The dream, sir, in which I saw Kilmeny! For though I wrote doun the poem on the sclate in the prime o' manhood, anither being than mysel did in verity compose or creawte it, sir, ae day when I was lyin a' by mysel in that laneliest spat, wi' but twa-three sheep aside me, ae linty and nae mair; but oh! how sweetly the glad cretur sang! and after *that some other cretur nor me* had composed or creawted it, she keepit whisper, whisperin the words far within my ears, till memory learned them a' off by heart as easy as the names o' Christian creturs that we meet wi' on Sabbaths at the kirk; and frae that genie-haunted hour, known now through a' braid Scotland is the Ettrick Shepherd——

North. Britain and America——

Shepherd. But for many obscure years a nameless man, or kent but by the name o' Jamie amang my simple compeers, I

carried bonny Kilmeny for ever in the arms o' my heart, kissin her shut een whan she sleepit, and her lips as calm as the lips o' death, but as sweet as them o' an undying angel!

North. And such was the origin of the finest Pastoral Lyric in our tongue!

Shepherd. Sic indeed, sir, was its origin. For my sowl, ye see, sir, had fa'n into a kind o' inspired dwaum—and the Green Leddy o' the Forest, nae less than the Fairy Queen hersel, had stown out frae the land o' peace on my slumber; and she it was that stooped doun, and wi' her ain lily-haun shedding frae my forehead the yellow hair, left a kiss upon my temples, just where the organ o' imagination or ideality lies; and at the touch arose the vision in which

"Bonny Kilmeny gaed up the glen."

and frae which you, sir, in your freendship say, that I becam ane o' the Immortals.

North. The moral of the tale?

Shepherd. The moral o' the tale is this—that never was I sae happy in my parent's hoose as I was that nicht—that Saturday nicht. Thae eemages o' ideal goodness and beauty had saftened a' ma heart—and sae far frae my heart becoming chilled as my fancy warmed, as you, Mr Muir, aver is the case, I sat as mute as a mouse by the ingle, thinkin on my faither and mither, and brithers and sisters, and on the possible force o' affection in filial and parental hearts, till I could hae dee'd for ony o' them; but since there was nae need o' that, I took a silent oath that I would behave mysel weel in life, that the hearts o' ma twa parents micht sing aloud for joy, and that I would work hard at ony mainner o' wark my maister chose to set me—auld Mr Laidlaw—that I micht in time mak up a sma' pose again' the day o' their auld age, and see that nae ither snaws than what Time draps frae his frosty fingers should ever let ae single flake fa' on their unsheltered heads.

North. And that oath you devoutly kept, James.

Shepherd. Ma "theory, at least, o' the social affections, was never sae refined and elevated as to unfit me for the practice o' them;" and yet I should be doing injustice to the spirit within me, to the spirit that breathed in the bosoms of Thomson, and Ramsay, and Burns,—to the spirit that reigns a' ower Scotland, and hath its holy altars at this day in ilka hut and

ilka shieling, did I fear to say, I—even I—have refined and elevated my theory of all the social affections far beyond the reach o' sic a meeserable deevil as Lowry Sterne; and that if people will whine ower dead asses, and neglect living mothers, the blame maun be attributed no to a refined and elevated theory o' the social affections; for I defy ony theory beneath the skies to be mair refined and elevated than is the practice o' the Christian, or imagination to conceive thochts or feelings half as beautifu' or shooblime as thousan's that the real agonies o' life, be they agonies o' woe or bliss, send into men's hearts, driving like hurricanes, or breathe them like the hush o' some lown place. Think o' the speerit o' a son or a father ca'd upon by nature to do his duty on some great emergency—think, sir, on his ha'in done it—and done it because he knew it was well-pleasing to God—and then show me, sir, any theory o' the social affections so high and so refined, that the mind would feel a fall frae it, if required to ack in the light and glow o' common humanity?

North. Mr Moore seems, by his mild-looking silence, James, to acquiesce——

Shepherd. Do you acquiesce, Mr Muir?—Weel, a nod's aneuch.

North. But Mr Moore, James, says, "that not only is the necessity of commerce with other minds less felt by such persons—(the men of a higher order of genius)—but, from that fastidiousness which the opulence of their own resources generates, the society of those less gifted with intellectual means than themselves, becomes often a restraint and burden, to which not all the charms of friendship, or even love, can reconcile them."

Shepherd. What? He would indeed be a pretty fallow, wha, in opulence o' his ain resources, fand a fastidiousness generated within him towards his sweetheart!—because, forsooth, the bonny lassie was less "gifted wi' intellectual means!" That would be rather philosophical, or rather pragmatical or pedantic, than poetical; and a girl would need to be a great gawpus indeed, provided she was modest, and loving, and handsome, and weel-faured—and a poet's mistress must be endowed wi' sic qualities—afore a man o' the higher order o' genius would feel fastidious to Fanny. Dinna you think sae, sir?

North. I do. Nay, I believe that, were a true poet to marry an idiot, 'tis a thousand to one that he would never find it out.

Shepherd. Just as wi' a dowdy.

North. Precisely.

Shepherd. The idiot would, in his eyes, be a Minerva, fresh frae the brain o' Jove——

North. Lemprière!

Shepherd. ——and the dowdy, a Venus attired by the Graces.

North. "Men of a high order of genius" are not unfrequently fastidious in the formation of their friendships. They are privileged to be so; but their friendships, when once formed with congenial spirits, though perhaps less gifted, are imperishable—and they are sacred, far beyond the conception of vulgar souls.

Shepherd. What do you mean by vulgar souls, sir?

North. Not the souls of shepherds, James, but of Bagmen.

Shepherd. Aneuch.

North. And what more common than friendships between men of transcendent genius, and men of no genius at all!

"Worth (not wit) makes the man—the want of it the fellow;"

and before the power of Virtue, Genius loves to stand, not rebuked, for haply there was no occasion for rebuke, but in abasement of spirit, and reverence of her who is a seraph.

Shepherd. A' orders o' minds mingle naturally, and o' their ain accord; and life wadna possess that delichtfully variegated character that is noo sae charmin, gin ilka class keepit aloof by itsel, and trusted to itsel for a' its enjoyment o' this warld!

North. Proceed to paint the inevitable results of any opposite system.

Shepherd. Suppose poets, for example, and o' poets we're speakin, a' flocked thegither——

North. On pretence of being birds of the same feather.

Shepherd. ——For a while they would a' luk unco bonny in the sunshine, sitting thegither on "some heaven-kissing hill," and assistin ane anither to sort their plummage, till it purpled wi' many-shiftin colours in the eye o' day, and seemed to set their necks and their wings on fire.

North—

"But ere the second Sunday came"——

Shepherd. ——The knowe would be a' covered wi' bluidy feathers, as if there had been foughten there a Welsh main o' cocks! Some o' the poets would be seen sittin on their doups, wi' their een pickit out, and yet, like true ggemm, dartin their nebs roun' aboot on a' sides, in howps o' finnin a foe. Ithers o' them would be aff and awa, whurr, ower the back o' beyont, and there venturin to raise an occasional craw on their new domain. And ane, obnoxious to a' the rest, would be lyin battered to bits, stane-dead. So much, sir, for birds o' a feather flocking thegither—when thae birds happened to be poets.

North. Whereas, by the economy of nature, "poets and all other men of the higher order of genius" are sprinkled over society, and all their ongoings intermingled with those of the children of the common clay. And thus "poets and men of the higher order of genius" are made to submit or to conform to the usages of this world, and its ordinary laws, or, if they do not, they soon are made to feel that they are ridiculous, and that genius is never less respected than when it chooses to wear a cap and bells.

Shepherd. Anither screed.

North. Mr Moore, towards the close of his disquisition, says, "that if the portrait he has attempted of those gifted with high genius, be allowed to bear, in any of its features, a resemblance to the originals, it can no longer be matter of question whether a class, so set apart from the track of ordinary life, so removed, by their very elevation, out of the influences of our common atmosphere, are at all likely to furnish tractable subjects for that most trying of all social experiments—matrimony."

Shepherd. I dinna like the soun' o' that sentence.

North. Nor I, James. In the first place, the portrait may bear, "in some of its features, a resemblance to the originals," and yet the question started by Mr Moore by no means be put to sleep.

Shepherd. His logic's out at the elbows.

North. Secondly, Mr Moore has utterly failed in showing that the class he speaks of are set apart from the track of ordinary life, and removed, by their very elevation, out of the influences of our common atmosphere.

Shepherd. And you, sir, have utterly succeeded in pruvin the very contrar.

North. Thirdly, there is a Cockneyish and Bagman-like

vulgarity in the would-be fashionable slang-whangishness of the terms, "at all likely to furnish subjects for that most trying of all social experiments—matrimony."

Shepherd. Hoo the deevil, Mr Muir, can ye, wi' ony semblance o' sense ava, man, ca' that the maist tryin o' a' "social experiments," which is, has been, and will be, performing by all men and women in the "varsal world," with the exception of a few fools or unfortunates, called bachelors and old maids, frae the beginning till the end o' time—frae Milton's First Man, to Campbell's Last?

North. Why, really, James, Mr Moore here speaks of matrimony in the style of a sentimental farce-writer for the Cobourg Theatre. Observe what a silly look the word "matrimony" wears, and how like ninnies the "men of the higher order of genius" *kythe*[1] on being brought forward by Hymen, in a string, and kicking and flinging out unlike "tractable subjects."

Shepherd. The haill discussion grows ludicrous on reflection, and an air o' insincerity, almost o' banter, Mr Muir, at last plays ower your features, as if you were bammin the public;—but the public's no sae easy bammed, sir, and imperiously demands "a wise and learned spirit" in him who takes it upon him to pruve that the holiest o' a' God and Natur's ordinances is no suited to men o' the higher order o' genius, wha should be a' monks and celibates, sae fastidious necessarily are they alike in freenship and love! Ony mair havers?

North. A few.

Shepherd. Say awa, for onything's better nor politics—I'm gratefu' to you for keepin aff them the nicht.

North. Politics! I had forgotten there was such a thing in all the wide world. But here is bit of poetical politics, by a young friend of mine, James—a promising youth, of the right kidney—and who, I doubt not, will one day or other do honour to an honourable name. My young friend informs me that the lines are written by one who, without positively condemning the late French Revolution, cannot bestow upon it that unqualified approbation which many wish it to receive,—much less can justify those in our own country, who, while they profess themselves friendly to the constitution, take advantage of the late transactions in France for the purpose of

[1] *Kythe*—show themselves.

inflaming the minds of an ignorant populace, and actually wear the Tricolor—the acknowledged badge of revolution.

THE TRICOLOR.

Again o'er the vine-colour'd regions of France
"See the day-star of Liberty rise!"
The plaudits of nations shall hail its advance
To its own native place in the skies.
O'er her patriot legions behold—as of yore—
The Tricolor banner unfurled;
'Tis the banner whose glory Napoleon bore
To the uttermost ends of the world.

The Red is the flush on the cheek of the brave,
As they tell of the deeds they have done;
And the Blue is the soft eye of Pity—to save,
When the battle of Freedom is won.
The White is the robe virgin Innocence wears—
France's triumphs are innocent now—
For unnurtured by blood, and unwater'd by tears,
Is the wreath that encircles her brow.

But though freshly and fairly the laurel may bloom
For France in this hour of her pride,
And the voice of her martyrs proclaim from the tomb
"'Twas in Liberty's cause that we died;"
Shame to those! who, unconscious of Liberty's worth,
Sound the tocsin of groundless alarm,
Nor know, that, when brought from the land of its birth,
The Tricolor loses its charm.

For the Red is Rebellion's appropriate hue,
The Blue, livid Envy's foul stain;
And the White is pale Terror, that trembles to do
The deeds the base heart can contain;
But the red rose of England, and Scotland's brown heath,
Twined with Ireland's green shamrock we see,
Then let's bind them the closer with Loyalty's wreath—
That's the Tricolor, Britain, for thee!

Shepherd. Capital, sir—capital!

North. In looking back through the lives of the most illustrious, we shall find, says Mr Moore, "that with scarcely

one exception, from Homer down to Lord Byron, they have been, in their several degrees, restless and solitary spirits"——

Shepherd. That's a lee.

North. —— "with minds," he continues, "wrapped up like silkworms in their own tasks"——

Shepherd. Oh! Mister Muir, but that's a desperate bad eemage. Homer and Byron—twa silkworms! But wull ye answer me this, sir, dinna silkworms marry? Linnæus says they do—and James Wulson showed me a box o' them a' enjoyin their hinnymoon. If sae, why shouldna poets marry too, as weel's thae bit "restless and solitary spirits" the silkworms, wham they, in their ither warks, it seems, sae nearly resemble?

North. Mr Moore may know more of Homer's life than I do, James; but I for one will never believe that he was a restless and solitary spirit——

Shepherd. Wrapped up like a silkworm. Nor me.

North. "A stranger and rebel," Mr Moore insanely adds, "to domestic ties, and bearing about with him a deposit for posterity in his soul, to the jealous watching and enriching of which almost all other thoughts and considerations have been sacrificed."

Shepherd. Says he that o' the ever-rejoicing Homer, wha was equally at hame on the battle-field, the plain o' ocean, the tent-palace o' the king o' men, the sky-dwelling o' the immortal gods?

North. Mr Henry Nelson Coleridge says well, in his Introduction to the Study of the Classics, Part First, "that Homer always seems to write in good spirits, and he rarely fails to put his readers in good spirits also. To do this is a prerogative of genius in all times; but it is especially so of the genius of primitive or heroic poetry. In Homer, head and heart speak, and are spoken to together. Morbid peculiarities of thought and temper have no place in him. He is as wide and general as the air we breathe, and the earth upon which we tread; and his vivacious spirit animates, like a Proteus, a thousand different forms of intellectual production —the life-preserving principle in them all. He is as the mighty strength of his own deep-flowing ocean,

> 'Whence all the rivers, all the seas have birth,
> And every fountain, every well on earth.'"

Shepherd. Oh, sir, what a wonnerfu' memory is yours! You're the only man I ever kent that can repeat aff by heart great screeds o' prose composition on a' manner o' soobjecks, just as if they were extemporawneous effusions o' his ain, thrown aff in the heat o' discoorse. Mr Henry Nelson Coleridge[1] maun be a clever fallow.

North. A scholar and a gentleman—though I intend taking him to task for a few trifles one of these days.

Shepherd. What's Hartley[2] about.

North. Dreaming in the leafless woods! Many an article he promises to send me—but I ask "Where are they?" and echo answers, "Where are they?"

Shepherd. Send him to boord wi' me in the Forest.

North. But to return to Mr Moore—he picks out the names o' some great *philosophers* who died bachelors, and having observed that they all "silently admitted their own unfitness for the marriage tie by remaining in celibacy"——

Shepherd. Hoot, toot. That's nae reasonin——

North. ——he observes, that the fate of *poets* in matrimony has but justified the caution of the philosophers. "While the latter," he says, "have given warning to genius by keeping free of the yoke, the others have still more effectually done so by their misery under it, the annals of this sensitive race having at all times abounded with proofs, that genius ranks but low among the elements of social happiness—that, in general, the brighter the gift, the more disturbing its influence—and that, in the married life particularly, its effects have been too often like that of the 'wormwood star,' whose light filled the waters on which it fell with bitterness."

Shepherd. Screeds o' prose-composition again, I declare! Oh! what'n a storehouse!

North. And then he boldly avers at once, that "on the list of married poets who have been unhappy in their homes, are the four illustrious names of Dante, Milton, Shakespeare, and Dryden—to which we must now add, as a partner in their destiny, a name worthy of being placed beside the greatest of them—Lord Byron."

[1] Henry Nelson Coleridge, a nephew of S. T. Coleridge.

[2] Hartley Coleridge, the son of S. T. Coleridge, was born in 1797, and died in 1849. He was the author of some poems of considerable merit, of *Biographies of Northern Worthies*, and a contributor to *Blackwood's Magazine*. His *Miscellanies* have been published in two volumes.

Shepherd. I never read a word o' Dante's "Comedy o' Hell," sae I sall say nae mair anent it, than that the soobjeck seems better adapted for tragedy — and as for Dryden, I'm no sae familiar's I should be wi' "Glorious John"—sae Byron may be equal, inferior, or superior to baith them twa.— But I hae read Shakspeer and Milton mony thousan' times, and, Mister Muir, ye had nae richt, sir, by your ipse-dixe, to place Byron by the side o' them twa, the greatest o' a' the children o' man—he maun sit, in a' his glory, far doun aneath their feet.

North. He must. But Mr Moore had no right to place Shakespeare and Milton on the list of miserable married men. Milton's character and conduct as a husband appear to have been noble and sublime. Of Shakespeare's married life we know nothing — or rather, less than nothing — a few dim and contradictory-seeming expressions, almost unintelligible, on the strength of which Mr Moore has not scrupled to place him as a partner in destiny along with Byron, the most miserable of the miserable, and at last a profligate. The destiny of Dante lay not in his marriage, however unhappy it might have been, —and 'tis a sorry way of dealing with the truth to slur and slobber over all its principal features.

Shepherd. It is that, sir.

North. The idiosyncrasies——

Shepherd. What a lang-nebbit polysyllable !

North. —— of all the Philosophers—and Poets—and men of the higher order of genius—whom Mr Moore adduces as examples of unfitness for marriage, were different, through all the possible degrees of difference—and yet he seeks to subject them all to one general law of life !

Shepherd. Maist illogical, and maist unphilosophic. I was just gaun to say—maist irrational—but that micht be ower strang a word. He was bound to hae taken them ane by ane, and to hae analeezed their specific characters, and to hae illustrated their fortunes and their fates, and their position in the times and places they flourished in, and then to hae applied the upshot o' the haill inquiry to the pint in haun—Were they, or were they not—and why and wherefore—likely or unlikely to hae been wicked or meeserable married men? Having failed to do a' that, and twice as muckle's a' that, why, Mister Muir, let me tell you to your face, ma canty chiel, that you

hae dune naething ava, and that your argument's about as strang's a spider's wab, that keeps flaffin in the wind beside a broken lozen, feckless even to catch flees—for by comes a great bummer, like Mr North or me, and carries it aff on his doup intil the open sunshine.

North. The subject of Mr Moore's elaborate failure, James, deserves discussion——

Shepherd. And it's had it.

North. But a few hints——

Shepherd. Sparks struck out by your steel and my flint, which hae only to fa' intil the gunpouther o' the thochtfu' reader's mind, in order to set the heaven o' his imagination in a bleeze, and show him a' the Life-region illuminated far and wide roun' the haill horizon.

North. Heaven and earth! my dear Shepherd, what a libel on the Living Illustrious of our own land! Great men are now among us——

Shepherd. Ay, Great Poets—born for a' time, sir—and a' married—a' wi' wives and weans—that is, the maist feck o' them—an' first-rate husbands and fathers, crouse as ggem-cocks on their walks, wi' fierce een, sharp nebs, lang claws, and rainbow tails, crawin till the welkin rings wi' their shrill clarions, and then doun wi' ane o' their wings——

North. Stop, James. I suspect Mr Moore, with all his palaver, has been fishing for a compliment——

Shepherd. And he shall catch ane—or rather I'll fasten ane on his hyuck—and he may whup it ower his head. A better husband and a better father than Mister Muir—excep, aiblins, it be mysel—canna be pictured; and yet, whatever may be the fate o' *Lalla Rookh*, his sangs 'ill last to a' eternity—that is, as lang's the Eerish nation—and afore it be extinguished, there'll be bluidy wark, for they're deevils for fechtin, and whaever prevails ower them to their utter extermination, wull hae little to brag on—but the twa nations 'ill be fund lyin stane-dead by ane anither's sides, and the dead 'ill hae to bury the dead.

North. One word more, James, and I have done.

Shepherd. Where's Mister Muir? This moment he was sittin at my elbow—and lo and behold he has vanished!

North. A phantom of your imagination, James.—Would it were a reality, for Mr Moore is a delightful person, and his

genius glances in conversation bright as the diamond-ring on his little finger.

Shepherd. Weel, I could hae taen ma Bible-oath that he was sittin in this chair, nod-noddin, noo at me, and then at you, wi' a sort o' slicht sardonic smile about the silent but expressive mouth o' him, amaist as much as to say that "what is writ is writ," and maun e'en remain *in secula seculorum.*

North. I hope better things. But if the passages now gently criticised be retained in the octavo edition,[1] I shall tackle to Mr Moore in a different trim, and, natheless my admiration of his genius, his character, and himself, his sconce shall feel the crutch.

Shepherd. What gin he pu't out o' your haun, and gie ye a clour on the side o' the head wi' your ain weapon? Grasp it furm, sir.

North. No—James. He that is cunning of fence—and I have taken lessons from Francalanza[2]—has a fine, easy, seemingly almost loose hold of the hilt—but out of that hold, sleight or strength has never yet beat or twitched my timber.

Shepherd. But you maunna hurt Mr Muir's head ower sair, although he has libelled us married men "o' the higher order o' genius."

North. Married men? By St Benedict, I am but a bachelor of hearts. Had I been double—instead of single—I might have sung small——

Shepherd. Sung sma'? Hae I sung sma' on this theorem? Why, sir, it's in the power o' ony ae man o' the higher order o' genius—say poetical genius—to lavish, in the prodigality o' his sowl, mair love on his wife, during ony ae day—ay, ony ae hour, than it's in the capacity o' a coof to bestow on his during fifty years, beginnin wi' the first blink o' the hinnymoon, and endin wi' the last lower o' the nicht that fa's upon her coffin. O! what a fearfu' heap o' passion can the poet cram intil ae embrace—ae kiss—ae smile—ae look—ae whisper—ae word—towards the partner o' his life—the mither o' his weans—the——

North. "You speak to me who never had a wife."

Shepherd. Puir chiel! I pity you. What although the poet's marriage-life be sometimes stormy—what though sometimes

[1] The passages here animadverted on *are* retained in the subsequent editions.

[2] See *ante,* vol. i. p. 70, note 2.

"Blackness come across it like a squall,
Darkening the sea?"

Yet wha can pent the glory and the brichtness o' the celestial calm—when the world o' them twa—o' him and his wife—may be likened till the ocean and a' her isles, in the breezy sunshine—and them twa themsels till consort-ships steering alang wi' a' their sails and a' their streamers—nae fear o' shoals or lee-shore rocks—on, on, on thegither towards the haven o' everlastin rest, amang the regions o' the settin sun! Or when it may be likened—that is, the world o' them twa—o' him and his wife—till the blue lift, a' a-lilt wi' laverocks——

North. Beautiful, James.

Shepherd. Is't? Weel, I'll sing't again—Till the blue lift, a' a-lilt wi' laverocks—and themsels twa, like consort-clouds—noo a wee way apairt—and noo meltin intil ane anither—purshued by een lookin up frae below—alang their sky-course—o' which the goal is set by God's ain haun far in amang the stars o' heaven!

North. More than beautiful, James—sublime.

Shepherd. And maun a' thae divine days and nichts be left out o' the estimate made o' the poet's married life? As weel micht a man libel a beautifu' and glorious summer, by talkin o' naething else but a few mountain-spates, or twa-three dreadfu' glooms o' thunner and lichtnin.

North. I give in. I am beat all to sticks. I am but Pan——

Shepherd. And I Apollo. Hurraw — hurraw — hurraw! Your nieve, sir.

North. The misery of marriage lies among the common herd.

Shepherd. There you have it, sir—amang the mean, the vile, the coorse, the brutal—where Hymen may be almost said, in the language o' Milton, "amang the bestial herds to range;" for what are men and women, mutually "feeding on garbage," as Shakspeer says, but the bestial? But wi' a' their sins and sorrows, and sometimes baith are sair, "men o' the higher order o' genius" still partake o' an almost divine natur,—the women that marries them are to "radiant angels linked"—Shakspeer again, sir;—nor do they "sate themselves in celestial beds"—Wullie ance mair—for, on leevin the eider-down o' the nuptial couch, out walks the poet amang the dewdraps o' the mornin, and as he sings his hymns at the shrine o' Natur, he feels that, lang as he is true to that reli-

gion, there is a perpetual "bridal o' the earth and sky" (auld Herbert) reminding him, as by a divine emblem, o' his ain union wi' her whom he has left in bliss, wi' a loving blossom in her bosom, aiblins the last-born o' the flock, wi' a look o' baith its pawrents mysteriously blended in its sleeping smiles.

North. I am mute.

Shepherd. I wush it would only chap twal—for I'm gettin desperate hungry. Ha! there's the warnin—in three minutes we sall see the gaucy[1] face o' Awmrose wi' the eisters.

North. "From such celestial colloquy sublime," how can we descend to shell-fish?

Shepherd. Wait a wee, and I'll show you that, sir. But wha sall we abuse neist?

North. Sir Walter Scott.

Shepherd. Sir Walter! Oh! but that would be wicked. Howsomever, he's but mortal—sae begin the abuse—and though I wunna just say that I'll join in't, yet——

North. You'll enjoy it.

Shepherd. Aiblins, sic is human natur. You're fleein at high ggemm the nicht, sir.

North. Reach me over his *Demonology*.

Shepherd. Where? Ou ay, on the brace-piece.

North. I told you, you may remember, at our last meeting, that——

Shepherd. I dinna remember ae single syllable o' what was said, either by you or me, at the last Noctes—nor, indeed, at ony o' the half hunder Nocteses celebrated in Gabriel's Road and Picardy since the Great Year o' the Chaldee. I never remembers naething—but a' that ever occurs to my mind has the appearance o' bein' imagination. A' thae Fifty-Twa Nocteses—what are they noo but dreams about dreams! Sometimes when I read the record o' ane o' them in the Maggazin, I wonner wha's that Shepherd that speaks about the Forest—till a' at ance I begin to jalouse that he's my verra ain sel, and that I really maun hae been carrying on the war bravely that nicht at Ambrose's, though in what year—I'm sure aneuch o' the century—it passed by like a sugh, naething is there in the wild words to tell—nor in the guffaws that a' luk sae silent, sir, in prent yellowed by time, ayc melancholy and mournfu' amaist as the smilin face o' a dear

[1] *Gaucy*—jolly.

freen in a picture, when ane luks at it, wi' a sigh, years after the original is dead!—But let's cut up Sir Walter—Hark!

[*The time-piece strikes Twelve, and enter* PICARDY *and his Tail, with "The Treasures of the Deep."*

North. Let me read aloud to you, my dear James, with suitable emphasis, a few paragraphs from the beginning, and tell me what you think of the composition.

Shepherd. Read awa, sir—read awa. I'm a freen till the deveesion o' labour. Readin's ae department, and eatin's anither, o' the great bizziness o' social life. I'm nae great haun at the first—sae I relinquish it to ane wha's a maister in the airt; but as to the ither, I'll play second knife and fork till nae man o' woman born—settin aside unnatural monsters o' gabiators.[1]—Dinna mummle.

North. "You have asked of me, my dear friend, that I should assist the Family Library with *the history of a dark chapter in human nature*, which the *increasing civilisation of all well-instructed countries* has now almost blotted out, though the *subject attracted no ordinary degree of consideration* in the olden times of their *history*."

Shepherd. What's your wull?

North. The "history of a chapter" is not a very happy expression, James, neither is "a chapter in human nature." "The increasing civilisation of all well-instructed countries," is very bad indeed, James; and it is not true that it has now almost blotted out "that dark chapter in human nature," for that dark chapter may be read now in the Book of Nature as plainly as before, provided we seek for it in the right place.

Shepherd. In Dahomey, Coomassie, Gondar—Oh! sic cisters!

North. "Though the *subject*"—what subject?—"attracted no ordinary degree of consideration" is poor writing; and then mark the cacophonous repetition, James, of the word *history* at the close of the sentence!

Shepherd. I canna defend it.—Whare's the vinegar cruet?

North. "Among much reading of my *early days*, it is no doubt true that I travelled a good deal in the twilight regions of superstitious disquisition. Many *hours have I lost.* 'I would their debt were less.'"

[1] *Gabiators*—gormandisers. I know of no authority for this word, and suspect that North invented it.

Shepherd. He didna lose them, sir. He carried them a' to a guid market.

North. "In examining old, as well as more *recent* narratives of this character, and *even in looking into some of the criminal trials* so frequent *in early days*, upon a *subject* which our fathers considered as matter of the last importance; and of late years the very curious extracts published by Mr Pitcairn, from the Criminal Records of Scotland, are, besides their historical value, of a nature so much calculated to illustrate the credulity of our ancestors *on such subjects*, that, by perusing them, I have been induced *more recently* to recall what I had read and thought upon *the subject* at a former period." "As, however, my information is only miscellaneous, and I make no pretensions, either to combat the systems of those by whom I am anticipated in the *consideration of the subject*," &c. &c. "A few general remarks on the *nature* of demonology, and the original cause of the almost universal belief in communication betwixt mortals and beings of a power superior to themselves, and *of a nature* not to be comprehended by human organs, are a necessary introduction to the *subject*." Here we have "early days" twice within the compass of two sentences—"a subject which our fathers considered as matter of the last importance," is a clumsy repetition of "the subject attracted no ordinary degree of consideration"—the word subject occurs *six* times, so as by its jingle to "attract no ordinary degree of consideration,"—and "nature" *four* times—while several other words are repeated with equal poverty of language—and not one sentence I have read, James, that is not cramped, clumsy, awkward, or inaccurate.

Shepherd. That's mortal bad writing, sir.—The pepper.

North. I shall not set you asleep, James, by reciting the two next paragraphs.

Shepherd. Nae fears. Look at the brodd.

North. "The conviction that such an indestructible essence *exists*, the belief expressed by the poet in a different sense, *non omnis moriar*, must infer the *existence* of," &c. "Some ideas of the *existence* of a deity," and "these spirits in a state of *separate existence*, being *admitted to exist!*" "To the multitude, the indubitable fact that so many millions of spirits *exist*," "the more numerous part of mankind cannot form in their

mind the idea of the spirit of the deceased *existing*," and "spectres which only *exist* in the mind," &c.

Shepherd. Ma faith! gin I was to write in that gate, hoo the critics wad be on ma tap!

North. "More than one learned physician, who have given *their attestation to the existence* of this most distressing complaint have *agreed that it actually occurs*"——

Shepherd. Stap—stap—stap, sir, nae forgery—that canna be it—sic towtological repetition o' ane and the same fack.

North. 'Tis odd—but let me get on to a specimen of Sir Walter's philosophy.

Shepherd. Do.—Here's a moothfu'!

North. Sir Walter tells us that "unfortunately, as is now universally *known* and admitted, there certainly *exists* more than one disorder *known* to professional men, of which one important symptom is a disposition to see apparitions. This frightful disorder is not properly insanity, although it is *somewhat allied* to that most horrible of maladies, and may, in many constitutions, be the means of bringing it on, and all such hallucinations are proper to both. The difference I conceive to be, that in cases of insanity the mind of the patient is principally affected, while the senses, or organic system, offer in vain to the lunatic their decided testimony against the fantasy of a deranged imagination."

Shepherd. I'll try this ane wi' moostard.

North. Sir Walter must have read little indeed on insanity, or he never could have written so. No doubt that in all cases of insanity the mind of the patient is *principally* affected; but in none is the organic system sound,—in few, have we reason to know that the senses do not deceive,—and in many—indeed in by far the greater number—we have reason to know that they do deceive, and are woefully disordered. The difference, therefore, which Sir Walter points out, is rarely indeed the real difference. *That* lies always wholly in the mind.

Shepherd. I'm inclined to gang alang wi' you, sir.

North. You *must* go along with me, James.

Shepherd. Na—no unless I like.

North. However, suppose that Sir Walter had stated the real difference, how does he illustrate it?

Shepherd. Hoo can I tell?

North. By the story of an insane patient in the Infirmary of Edinburgh, who, though all his meals consisted of porridge, believed that he had every day a dinner of three regular courses and a dessert—and yet confessed that, somehow or other, everything he ate tasted of porridge! The case, says Sir Walter, is obvious—the disease lay in the extreme vivacity of the patient's imagination, deluded in other instances, but not absolutely powerful enough to contend with the honest evidence of his stomach and palate. Here, therefore, Sir Walter adds, "is one instance of actual insanity, in which the sense of taste *controlled and attempted to restrain the ideal hypothesis* adopted by a deranged imagination." But who knows that all this insane patient's senses were not diseased? He acted as if they were so—though his palate was still sensible to the porridge taste. They might, or they might not, be diseased—but Sir Walter's conclusion is most illogical. The "sense of taste controlling and attempting to restrain an ideal hypothesis," is language altogether new in mental philosophy.

Shepherd. Sae muckle the better.

North. No—so much the worse.

Shepherd. Oh, sir! but ye're dictatorial the nicht!

North. Hitherto Sir Walter, though not happy in his illustrations, is yet intelligible, and not absolutely self-inconsistent. But by-and-by he falls into sad self-contradiction.

Shepherd. It's wonnerfu', sir, hoo common that is. I really maun publish ma "Logic." Do you think the bairds o' eisters pushionish?[1]

North. "The disorder to which I previously alluded is *entirely of a bodily character*, and consists, principally, in a disease of the visual organs, which present to the patient a set of spectres, or appearances, which have no actual existence. It is a disease of the same nature which renders many men incapable of distinguishing colours, only *the patients go a step farther*, and pervert the external form of objects. In this case, therefore, contrary to that of the maniac, *it is not the mind*, or rather the imagination, which imposes upon, and overpowers the evidence of the senses, but the sense of seeing or hearing, which betrays its duty, and conveys false ideas to *a sane* intellect.

[1] Poisonous.

Shepherd. Weel, then, isna a' that intelligible aneuch ?

North. Perfectly so—but wait, James, for the illustrations.

Shepherd. I'm quite wullin to wait for the illustrations, sir, as lang's there's a Pandoor on the brodd.

North. Meanwhile, how could Sir Walter say that the disease of the visual organs, which presents to the patient a set of spectres or appearances which have no existence, is a disease of the same nature with that which renders many men incapable of distinguishing colours? The latter is but a *defect*—the other is indeed a *disease ;* but I suppose Sir Walter merely means that they both belong to the eye.

Shepherd. Aiblins.

North. There is something to my mind not a little ludicrous in Sir Walter's simplicity, when he says, "*only the patients go a step farther*, and pervert the external form of objects."

Shepherd. An' a patient *gangs yet anither step farther* when he does—that is his last step—for after it, he's carried.

North. The two cases, James, which Sir Walter proposes, are essentially distinct and different.

Shepherd. They are sae—but noo for your objections to Sir Walter's illustrations.

North. Sir Walter has been at great pains to tell us, that "this *disease is entirely of a bodily character*"—"it is *not the mind*, or rather the imagination, which imposes"——

Shepherd. I ken a' that—gang on.

North. You may ken a' that, James ; but Sir Walter, in the very next page, has forgotten it, and with difficulty could I *believe my eyes*, James, when in the paragraph immediately following, I read—"The most frequent source of the malady is in the dissipated and intemperate habits of those who, by a continued series of intoxication, become subject to what is popularly called the Blue Devils, instances of which MENTAL DISORDER (!!) may be known to most who have lived in society where hard drinking was a common vice." Here Sir Walter not only loses sight of his own distinction, which he had so pomposuly laid down, but he dishes it at one blow. This disease, which he told us before was "entirely of a bodily character," is now, it seems, a "mental disorder."

Shepherd. It's a pity to see folk writin on soobjecks they

haena considered, and therefore canna understaun. It's a cut-throat o' a contradiction.

North. Sir Walter then goes on to illustrate "this disease, which is entirely of a bodily character," and thereby distinguishable from insanity, and yet is at the same time "a mental disorder," by the case of a young gentleman, one of whose principal complaints was the frequent presence of a set of apparitions resembling a band of figures dressed in green. Sir Walter then tells us, with astounding forgetfulness of his own theory, that the whole "*corps de ballet* existed only in the patient's *imagination*." If they did, then the disease was of the imagination, and not of the sense; but the story is told to show that the disease was one of the sense, and not of the imagination.

Shepherd. Eh? Eh? That is really stoopit in Sir Walter.

North. Sir Walter again speaks of the patient's depraved imagination—and adds a word or two about association, which, if they have any meaning at all, must likewise refer to a mental, and not to a bodily disease. But it was of a bodily disease, and not of a mental disorder, that he formally announced his ambition to speak, and to illustrate it by a tale!

Shepherd. The Baronet has wrote that before he had been fairly waukened out o' a soun' sleep, and had got a' his wanderin wuts collectit.

North. Just so. I beg leave to recommend the shower-bath.

Shepherd. Or the plunge.

North. One other sample of confusion of ideas, James, and I have done with Demonology. Sir Walter wishes to explain and illustrate the effect sometimes produced on the mind in sleep, by the dreamer touching with his hand some other part of his own person.

Shepherd. I ken about that. He's right there.

North. No. He is wrong. The dreamer, says Sir Walter, is clearly in this case "both the actor and patient, both the proprietor of the member touching, and of that which is touched; while to increase the complication, the mind is both toucher of the limb on which it rests, and receives an impression of touch from it; and the same is the case with the limb, which at one and the same time receives an impression from

the hand, and conveys to the mind a report respecting the size, substance, and the like, of the member touching."

Shepherd. That's geyan kittle.[1]

North. It is so only because badly expressed—and indeed the last part of the sentence does not contain the meaning which the Baronet supposes or intends—but let that pass——

Shepherd. You're no lettin't pass, you savage.

North. But hark what follows. "Now, as during sleep the patient is unconscious," quoth Sir Walter, "that both limbs are his own identical property, his mind is apt to be much disturbed by the complication of sensations arising from two parts of his person being at once acted upon, and from their reciprocal action; and false impressions are thus received, which, accurately inquired into, would afford a clue to many puzzling phenomena in the theory of dreams."

Shepherd. What! is a patient in sleep unconscious that baith limbs are his ain identical property?—I canna swallow that.

North. But suppose we do swallow it, James, and then consequences the very reverse of those Sir Walter mentions must ensue. For by this unconsciousness, all the complication of sensations which Sir Walter so clumsily explains the cause of, is prevented from taking place. It becomes impossible.

Shepherd. Sae it does, sir. I never observed that afore, till you pointed it out. 'Tis anither cut-throat contradiction.

North. But, countryman, lend me your ears. As an illustration of the effect of this complication of sensations that may be produced in a dream, Sir Walter tells us a story of a nobleman, who once awoke in horror, still feeling the cold dead grasp of a corpse's hand on his right wrist. It was a minute before he discovered that his own left hand was in a state of numbness, and with it he had accidentally encircled his right arm. Now, James, this story, which Sir Walter tells to illustrate how the "patient's mind was disturbed by the complication of sensations arising from two parts of his person," illustrates the very reverse, namely, how the patient's mind was disturbed, but by one simple sensation, that of a corpse's hand, his own hand being perfectly numb, that is, without sensation at all, and acting therefore precisely as a corpse's

[1] *Geyan kittle*—rather difficult—to follow.

hand, or a piece of lead. So much for Sir Walter's metaphysics.

Shepherd. Hurraw—Hurraw!—Hollo! Gurney!

[*The time-piece strikes Twelve—and enter St Ambrose and his Monks with a roasted goose, son of the celebrated prize-goose who won the stubble-sweepstakes in* 1829*; and ditto hare, the identical animal killed by Lord Eglinton's goshawk, by which he won the cup at the last meeting of the Ardrossan Coursing Club.* GURNEY *emerges from the ear of Dionysius, and the Noctes closes.*

XXVIII.

(FEBRUARY 1831.)

Scene,—The Snuggery. Time,—Nine. Present,—North, Shepherd, *and* Tickler.

Tickler. Centaur! No more like a centaur, James, than he is like a whale. Ducrow[1] is not "demi-corpsed"—as Shakespeare said of Laertes — with what he bestrides; how could he, with half-a-dozen horses at a time? If the blockheads will but look at a centaur, they will see that he is not six horses and one man, but one manhorse or horseman, galloping on four feet, with one tail, and one face much more humane than either of ours——

Shepherd. Confine yoursel to your ain face, Mr Tickler. A centaur would hae sma' diffeeculty in ha'in a face mair humane nor yours, sir — for it's mair like the face o' Notus or Eurus nor a Christian's; but as for ma face, sir, it's meeker and milder than that o' Charon himsel——

North. Chiron, James.

Shepherd. Weel, then, Cheeron be't—when he was instillin wisdom, music, and heroism intil the sowl o' Achilles, him that afterwards grew up the maist beautifu' and dreadfu' o' a' the sons o' men.

Tickler. The glory of Ducrow lies in his Poetical Impersonations. Why, the horse is but the air, as it were, on which he flies! What godlike grace in that volant motion, fresh from Olympus, ere yet "new-lighted on some heaven-kissing hill!" What seems "the feathered Mercury" to care for the horse, whose side his toe but touches, as if it were a cloud in the ether? As the flight accelerates, the animal absolutely

[1] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 81.

disappears, if not from the sight of our bodily eye, certainly from that of our imagination, and we behold but the messenger of Jove, worthy to be joined in marriage with Iris.

Shepherd. I'm no just sae poetical's you, Mr Tickler, when I'm at the Circus; and ma bodily een, as ye ca' them, that's to say, the een, ane on ilka side o' ma nose, are far ower gleg ever to lose sicht o' yon bonny din meer.

North. A dun mare, worthy indeed to waft Green Turban,

"Far descended of the Prophet line,"

across the sands of the Desert.

Shepherd. Ma verra thocht! As she flew round like lichtnin, the sawdust o' the amphitheatre becam the sand-dust o' Arawbia—the heaven-doomed region, for ever and aye, o' the sons o' Ishmael.

Tickler. Gentlemen, you are forgetting Ducrow.

Shepherd. Na. It's only you that's forgettin the din meer. His Mercury's beautifu'; but his Gladiawtor's shooblime.[1]

Tickler. Roman soldier you mean, James.

Shepherd. Haud your tongue, Tickler. Isna a Roman sodger a Gladiawtor? Doesna the verra word, Gladiawtor, come frae the Latin for swurd? Nae wunner the Romans conquered a' the warld, gin a' their sodgers focht like yon! Sune as Ducraw tyuck his attitude, as steadfast on the steed as on a stane, there ye beheld, staunin afore you, wi' helmet, swurd, and buckler, the eemage o' a warriour-king! The hero looked as gin he were about to engage in single combat wi' some hero o' the tither side — some giant Gaul—perhaps himsel a king—in sicht o' baith armies—and by the eagle-crest could ye hae sworn, that sune would the barbaric host be in panic-flicht. What ither man o' woman born could sustain sic strokes, delivered wi' sovereign micht and sovereign majesty, as if Mars himsel had descended in mortal guise, to be the champion o' his ain eternal city.

North. Ma verra thocht.

Shepherd. Your thocht! you bit puir, useless, trifling cretur! — Ax your pardon, sir — for really, in the enthusiasm o' the moment, I had forgotten wha's vice it was, and thocht it was Mr Tickler's.

[1] Ducrow's impersonations of ancient statues were as perfect as his horsemanship.

Tickler. Whose?

Shepherd. Sit still, sir. I wunner gin the Romans, in battle, used, like our sodgers, to cry, "Huzzaw, huzzaw, huzzaw!"

North. We learned it from them, James. And ere all was done, we became their masters in that martial vociferation. Its echoes frightened them at last among the Grampians; and they set sail from unconquered Caledon.

Shepherd. What a bluidy beatin Galgacus gied Agricola!

North. He did so indeed, James—yet see how that fellow, his son-in-law, Tacitus, lies like a bulletin. He swears the Britons lost the battle.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw! What? I've been at the verra spat—and the tradition's as fresh as if it had been but the verra day after the battle, that the Romans were cut aff till a man.

North. Not one escaped?

Shepherd. Deevil the ane — the hills, whare the chief carnage rotted, are greener nor the lave till this hour. Nae white clover grows there—nae white daisies—wad you believe me, sir, they're a' red. The life-draps seepit[1] through the grun'—and were a body to dig doun far aneuch, wha kens but he wouldna come to coagulated gore, strengthening the soil aneath, till it sends up showers o' thae sanguinary gowans and clover, the product o' inextinguishable Roman bluid?[2]

Tickler. The Living Statues!

North. Perfect. The very Prometheus of Æschylus. Oh! James! what high and profound Poetry was the Poetry of the world of old! To steal fire from heaven—what a glorious conception of the soul in its consciousness of immortality!

Shepherd. And what a glorious conception o' the sowl, in its consciousness o' immortality, o' Divine Justice! O the mercy o' Almichty Jove! To punish the Fire-stealer by fastenin him doun to a rock, and sendin a vultur to prey on his liver—perpetually to keep prey-preyin on his puir liver, sirs—waur even nor the worm that never dees,—or, if no waur, at least as ill—rug-ruggin—gnaw-gnawin—tear-

[1] *Seepit*—soaked.

[2] As Lotichius sings of the banks of the Neckar—

"Ripa gerit regum natos e sanguine flores,
E quibus Heroum texent sibi serta nepotes."

tearin—howk-howkin, at his meeserable liver aye wanin and aye waxin aneath that unpacified beak—that beak noo cuttin like a knife, noo clippin like shissors, noo chirtin like pinchers, noo hagglin like a cleaver! A' the while the body o' the glorious sinner bun' needlessly till a rock-block—needlessly bun', I say, sir, for stirless is Prometheus in his endurance o' the doom he drees, as if he were but a Stane-eemage, or ane o' the unsufferin dead?

North. A troubled mystery!

Shepherd. Ane amaist fears to pity him, lest we wrang fortitude sae majestical. Yet see, it stirs! Ha! 'twas but the vultur. Prometheus himself is still—in the micht, think ye, sir, o' curse or prayer? Oh! yonner's just ae single slicht shudder—as the demon, to get a stronger purchase at his food, taks up new grun' wi' his tawlons, and gies a fluff and a flap wi' his huge wings again' the ribs o' his victim, utterin—was't horrid fancy?—a gurglin throat-croak choked savagely in bluid!

North. The Spirit's triumph over pain, that reaches but cannot pierce its core—

"In Pangs sublime, magnificent in Death!"

Tickler. Life in Death! Exultation in Agony! Earth victorious over Heaven? Prometheus bound in manglings on a sea-cliff, more godlike than Jove himself, when

"Nutu tremefecit Olympum!"

Shepherd. Natur victorious ower the verra Fate her ain imagination had creawted! And in the dread confusion o' her superstitious dreams, glorifying the passive magnanimity o' man, far ayont the active vengeance o' the highest o' her gods? A wild bewilderment, sirs, that ought to convince us, that nae licht can ever be thrown on the moral government that reigns ower the region o' human life—nae licht that's no mair astoundin than the blackness o' darkness—but that o' Revelation that ae day or ither shall illumine the uttermost pairts o' the earth.

North. Noble. These Impersonations by Ducrow, James, prove that he is a man of genius.

Shepherd. Are they a' his ain inventions.

North. Few or none. Why, if they were, he would be the

greatest of sculptors. But thus to convert his frame into such forms — shapes — attitudes — postures—as the Greek imagination moulded into perfect expression of the highest states of the soul—*that*, James, shows that Ducrow has a spirit kindred to those who in marble made their mythology immortal.

Shepherd. That's bonny—na, that's gran'. It gars a body grue—just like ane o' thae lines in poetry that suddenly dirls through you — just like ae smite on a single string by a master's haun, that gars shiver the haill harp.

Tickler. Ducrow was not so successful in his Apollo.

North. 'Twas the Apollo of the painters, Tickler; not of the sculptors.

Tickler. True. But why not give us the Belvidere?

North. I doubt if that be in the power of mortal man. But even were Ducrow to show us that statue with the same perfection that crowns all his other impersonations, unless he were to stand for hours before us, we should not feel, to the full, its divine majesty; for in the marble it grows and grows upon us as our own spirits dilate, till the Sun-god at last almost commands our belief in his radiant being, and we hear ever the fabled Python groan!

Tickler. Yes, North, our emotion is progressive—just as the worshipper, who seeks the inner shrine, feels his adoration rising higher and higher at every step he takes up the magnificent flight in front of the temple.

Shepherd. Na, na, na—this 'ill never do. It's manifest that you twa hae entered intil a combination again' me, and are comin ower me wi' your set speeches, a' written doun, and gotten aff the nicht afore, to dumfounder the Shepherd. What bit o' paper 's that, Mr Tickler, keekin out o' the pocket o' your vest? Notts. Notts in short haun—and a' the time you was pretendin to be crunklin't up to licht the tip o' your segawr, hae you been cleekin haud o' the catch-word—and that's the gate you deceive the Snuggery intil admiration o' your extemporawneous eeloquence! The secret's out noo—an' I wunner it was never blawn afore; for noo that ma een are opened, they set till richts my lugs; and on considerin hoo matters used to staun' in the past, I really canna chairge ma memory wi' a mair feckless cretur than yoursel at a reply.

North. You do me cruel injustice, James—were I to prepare a single paragraph, I should stick——

Shepherd. Oh! man, hoo I would enjoy to see you stick! stickin a set speech in a ha' fu' o' admirin, that is, wunnerin hunders o' your fellow-citizens, on Parliamentary Reform, for instance, or Slavery in the Wast Indies, or——

North. The supposition, sir, is odious; I——

Shepherd. No in the least degree odious, sir—but superlatively absurd, and ludicrous far ayont the boun's o' lauchter—excepp that lauchter that torments a' the inside o' a listener and looker-on, an internal earthquake that convulses a body frae the pow till the paw, frae the fingers till the feet, till a' the pent-up power o' risibility bursts out through the mouth, like the lang-smouldering fire vomited out o' the crater o' a volcawno, and then the astonished warld hears, for the first time, what heaven and earth acknowledge by their echoes to be indeed—a Guffaw!

North. James, you are getting extremely impertinent?

Shepherd. Nae personality, sir; nae personality sall be alloo'd, in ma presence at least, at a Noctes. That's to say, nae personality towards the persons present—for as to a' the rest o' the warld, men, women, and children, I carena though you personally insult, ane after anither, a' the human race.

North. I insult?

Shepherd. Yes—you insult. Haena ye made the haill civileesed warld your enemy by that tongue and that pen o' yours, that spares neither age nor sect?

North. I???

Shepherd. You!!!

Tickler. Come, come, gentlemen, remember where you are, and in whose presence you are sittin; but look here—here is the

APOLLO BELVIDERE.

[TICKLER *is transformed into Apollo Belvidere.*

Shepherd. That's no canny.

North. In his lip "what beautiful disdain!"

Shepherd. As if he were smellin at a rotten egg.

North. There "the Heavenly Archer stands."

Shepherd. I wadna counsel him to shoot for the Guse Medal. Henry Watson[1] would ding him till sticks.

[1] Mr Henry Watson, an accomplished member of the Queen's Body-Guard, the Royal Scottish Archers, is a brother of the distinguished painter, Sir John Watson Gordon.

North. I remember, James, once hearing an outrageous dispute between two impassioned connoisseurs, amateurs, men of *vertu*, cognoscenti, dilettanti, about this very Apollo Belvidere.

Shepherd. Confoun' me gin he's no monstrous like marble! His verra claes seem to hae drapped aff him—and I'se no pit on my specks, for fear he should pruve to be naked.—What was the natur o' the dispute?

North. Simply whether Apollo advanced his right or left foot——

Shepherd. Ane o' the disputants maun hae been a great fule. Shouldna Apollo pit his best fit foremost, that is the richt ane, on such an occasion as shootin a Peethon? Hut-tut.—Stop a wee—let's consider. Na, it maun be the left fit foremost—unless he was ker-haun'd.[1] Let's try't.

[*The* Shepherd *rises, and puts himself into the attitude of the Apollo Belvidere—insensibly transforming himself into another* Tickler *of a shorter and stouter size.*

North. I could believe myself in the Louvre, before Mrs Hemans wrote her beautiful poem on the *Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy.* Were the two brought to the hammer, an auctioneer might knock them down for ten thousand pounds each.

Shepherd. Whilk of us is the maist Apollonic, sir?

North. Why, James, you have the advantage of Tickler, in being, as it were, in the prime of youth—for though by the parish register you have passed the sixtieth year-stone on the road of life, you look as fresh as if you had not finished the first stage.

Shepherd. Do you hear that, Mr Tickler?

North. You have also most conspicuously the better of Mr Tickler in the article of hair. Yours are locks—his leeks.

Shepherd. Mr Tickler, are you as deaf and dumb's a statute, as weel's as stiff?

North. As to features, the bridge of Tickler's nose—begging his pardon—is of too prominent a build. The arch reminds me of the old bridge across the Esk, at Musselburgh.

Shepherd. What say you to that, Mr Tickler?

North. "'Tis more an antique Roman than a"——

Shepherd. Mr Tickler?

North. But neither is the nose of the gentle Shepherd pure Grecian.

Tickler. Pure Peebles?

[1] *Ker-haun'd*—left-handed.

Shepherd. Oho! You've fun' the use o' your tongue.

North. Of noses so extremely——

Shepherd. Mine's, I ken,'s a cockit ane. Our mouths?

North. Why, there, I must say, gentlemen, there's a wide opening for——

Tickler. Don't blink the buck-teeth.

Shepherd. Better than nane ava.

North. Of Tickler's attitude I should say generally—that is——

[*Here* TICKLER *reassumes* SOUTHSIDE, *and taking the Snuggery at a stride, usurps* THE CHAIR, *and outstretches himself to his extremest length, with head leaning on the ridge, and his feet some yards off on the fender.*

Shepherd (*leaping about*). Huzzaw—huzzaw—huzzaw!—I've beaten him at Apollo! Noo for Pan.

[*The* SHEPHERD *performs Pan in a style that would have seduced Pomona.*

Tickler. Ay—that's more in character.

North. Sufficient, certainly, to frighten an army.

Tickler. The very picture of our Popular Devil.

North. Say rather, with Wordsworth—

"Pan himself,
The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring god."

Shepherd. Keep your een on me—keep your een on me—and you'll soon see a change that will strike you wi' astonishment. But rax me ower the poker, Mr North—rax me ower the poker.

[NORTH *puts the poker into Pan's paws, and instanter he is Hercules.*

Tickler (*clapping his hands*). Bravo! Bravissimo!

North. I had better remove the crystal. (*Wheels the circular closer to the hearth.*) James, remember the mirror.

Tickler. At that blow dies the Nemean lion.

[*The* SHEPHERD, *flinging down the poker-club, seems to drag up the carcass of the Monster with a prodigious display of muscularity, and then stooping his neck, heaves it over his head, as into some profound abyss.*

North. Ducrow's Double!

Shepherd (*proudly*). Say rather the Dooble, that's Twa, o' Ducraw. Ducraw's nae mair fit to ack Hercules wi' me, than he is to ack Samson.

Tickler. I believe it.

Shepherd. I could tell ye a droll story about me and Mr Ducraw. Ae nicht I got intil an argument wi' him at the Caffée, about the true scriptral gate o' ackin the Fear o' the Philistines, and I was pressin him geyan hard about his method o' pu'in doun the pillars, when he turns about upon me—and bein' putten to his metal—says, "Mr Hogg, why did not you object to my representing in one scene—and at one time—Samson carrying away the gates of Gaza, and also pulling down the pillars?"

North. There he had you on the hip, James.

Shepherd. I hadna a word to say for't—but confessed at ance that it's just the way o' a' critics wha stumble ower molehills, and yet mak naething o' mountains. The truth is, that a' us that are maisters in the fine arts, kens ilka ane respectively about his ain airt a thousan' times mair nor ony possible body else—and I thocht on the pedant lecturin Hannibal on war, or ony ither pedant me on poetry, or St Cecilia on music, or Christopher North on literatur, or Sir Isaac Newton on the stars, or——

North. Now, James, that you may not say that I ever sulkily or sullenly refuse to contribute my quota of "weel-timed daffin" to the Noctes—behold me in

HERCULES FURENS.

[NORTH *off with coat and waistcoat in a jiffy, and goes to work.*

Shepherd. That fearsome! Dinna tear your shirt to rags—dinna tear your shirt to rags, sir!

Tickler. The poison searches his marrow-bones now!

Shepherd. His bluid's liquid fire!

Tickler. Lava.

Shepherd. Linens is cheap the noo, to be sure—dinna tear your shirt, sir—dinna tear your shirt. What pains maun a' that shuin[1] on the breist and collar hae cost Mrs Gentle!

Tickler. O Dejanira! Dejanira! Dejanira!

Shepherd. That out-hercules's Hercules! Foamin at the mouth like a mad dowg! The Epilepsy! The quiverin o' his hauns! The whites o' his een, noo flickerin and noo fixed! Oh! dire misshapen lauchter, drawin his mouth awa up alang the tae side o' his face, outower till ane o' his lugs! Puir Son o' Alknomook!

[1] *Shuin*—sewing.

Tickler. Alcmena, James.

Shepherd. A' his labours are near an end noo! A' the fifty, if crooded and crammed intil ane, no sae terrible as the last! Loup—loup—loup—tummle—tummle—tummle—sprawl—sprawl—sprawl—row—row—row—roun' about—roun' about—roun' about—like an axle-tree—then ae sudden streek out intil a' his length, and there lies he straught, stiff, and stark, after the dead-thraws, like a gnarled oak-trunk that had keept knottin for a thousan' years.

Tickler. But for an awkward club-foot too much, would I exclaim,

"Cedite Romani *imitatores!* Cedite Graii."

Shepherd (*raising North from the floor*). Do you ken, sir, you fairly tyuck me in — and I'm a' in a trummle. It's like Boaz frichtenin Ingleby[1] wi' his ain ba's.

North. Rather hot work, my dear James. I'm beginning to perspire.

Shepherd (*feeling North's forehead*). Beginnin till perspire!! Never afore, in this weary warld, was a man in sic an even-doun pour o' sweet! A perspiration-fa'! The same wi' your breist! What? You couldna hae been watter had you stood after a thunner-plump for an hour under a roan.

North. Say spout, James, roan is vulgar—it is Scotch—and your English is so pure now, that a word like that grates harshly on the ear, so that were you in England, you would undeceive and alarm the natives. But let us recur to the subject under spirited discussion immediately before Raphael's Dream—I mean the Jug.

Shepherd. Let us come our wa's in till the fire.

[*The Three are again seated at "the wee bit ingle blinking bonnily."*

North. Where were we?

Shepherd. Ou ay. I was beginnin to pent a pictur o' you, sir, stickin a speech on Slavery or Reform. Slowly you rise—and at the uprisin "o' the auld man eeloquent" hushed is that assemblage as sleep. But wide awake are a' een—a' fixed on Christopher North, the orator o' the human race.

Tickler. As is usual to say on such occasions—you might hear a pin fall—say a needle, which, having no head, falls lighter.

[1] Two famous racket-players, I believe.

Shepherd. He begins laigh, and wi' a dimness in and around his een—a kind o' halo, sic as obscures the moon afore a storm. But sune his vice gets louder and louder, musical at its tapmost hicht, as the breath o' a silver trumpet. Action he has little or nane—noo and then the richt haun on the heart, and the left arm at richt angles till the body—just sae, —like Mr Pitt's,—only this far no like Mr Pitt's—for there's nae sense in that—no up and doun like the haunle o' a well-pump. What reasonin ! What imagination ! Fancy free and fertile as an auld green flowery lea ! Pathos pure as dew—and wit bricht as the rinnin waters, translucent

" At touch ethereal o' heaven's fiery rod ! "

Tickler. Spare his blushes, Shepherd, spare his blushes.

Shepherd. Wae's me—pity on him—but I canna spare his blushes—sae, sir, just hang doun your head a wee, till I conclude. In the verra middle o' a lang train o' ratiocination—(I'm gratefu' for havin gotten through that word)—surrounded, ahint and afore, and on a' sides, wi' countless series o' syllogisms—in the very central heart o' a forest o' feegurs, containin many a garden o' flowers o' speech—within sicht, nay amaist within touch, o' the feenal cleemax, at which the assemblage o' livin sowls were a' waitin to break out intil thunder, like the waves o' the sea impatient for the first smiting o' a storm seen afar on the main,—at that verra crisis and agony o' his fame, Christopher is seized wi' a sudden stupification o' the head and a' its faculties, his brain whirls dizzily roun', as if he were a' at ance waukenin out o' a dream, at the edge o' a precipice, or on a "coign o' disadvantage," outside the battlements o' a cloud-capt tower ; his eyes get bewildered, his cheeks wax white, struck seems his tongue wi' palsy, he stutters—stutters—stutters—and "of his stutterin finds no end" till—HE STICKS !

Tickler. Fast as a waggon mired up to the axle-tree, while Roger, with the loosened team, steers his course back to the farm-steading, with arms a-kimbo on old Smiler's rump.

Shepherd. He fents ! a cry for cauld spring-water——

North (frowning). Hark ye—when devoid of all probability —nay, at war with possibility—fiction is falsehood, fun folly, mirth mere maundering, humour forsooth ! idiotcy, would-be wit "wersh as parritch without saut," James a merry-Andrew, and the Shepherd—sad and sorry am I to say it—a Buffoon !

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw! O man, but you're angry. It's aye the way o't. Them that's aye tryin ineffecktwally to make a fule o' ithers, when the tables are turned on them, gang red-wud-stark-staring mad a' thegither, and scarcely leave theirsels the likeness o' a dowg. But forgie me, sir—forgie me—I concur wi' you that the description was naething but a tissue — as you hae sae ceevily and coortusly said — o' fausehood, folly, maunderin idiotcy, and wersh parritch——

Tickler. James a merry-Andrew, and the Shepherd a Buffoon!

Shepherd. Dinna "louse your tinkler jaw, sir," as Burns said o' Charlie Fox, on me, Mr Tickler — for I'll no thole frae you a tithe, Timothy, o' what I'll enjoy frae Mr North — an' it's no twice in the towmont I ventur to ca' him Kit. Oh! my dear freen, Mr North, do you ken, sir, that in lookin ower some sax-year auld accoonts——

Tickler. Paid?

Shepherd. No by you at least—for a bill o' butter for smearin, what should come till haun but a sort o' droll attempt at a sang by that dead facetious fallow, the late Bishop o' Bristol.

Tickler. Scotty!

Shepherd. Doctor Scott!

Tickler. The Doctor!

North. The Odontist![1]

[1] The Odontist was a real character. He is thus described in Hogg's *Reminiscences of Former Days:* "Of all the practical jokes that ever Lockhart played off on the public in his thoughtless days, the most successful and ludicrous was that about Dr Scott. He was a strange-looking, bald-headed, bluff little man that practised as a dentist, both in Glasgow and Edinburgh, keeping a good house and hospitable table in both, and considered skilful; but for utter ignorance of everything literary, he was not to be matched among a dozen street-porters with ropes round their necks. This droll old tippling sinner was a joker in his way, and to Lockhart and his friends, a subject of constant mystifications and quizzes which he partly saw through; but his uncommon vanity made him like the notice, and when at last the wags began to publish songs and ballads in his name, O, then, he could not resist going into the delusion! and though he had a horrid bad voice and hardly any ear, he would roar and sing the songs in every company as his own. Ignorant and uneducated as he was, Lockhart sucked his brains so cleverly, and crammed the Odontist's songs with so many of the creature's own peculiar phrases, and the names and histories of his obscure associates, that, though I believe the man could scarce spell a note of three lines, even his intimate acquaintances were obliged to swallow the hoax, and by degrees 'the odontist' passed for a first-rate convivial bard, that had continued to eat and drink and draw teeth for fifty years and more, without ever letting the smallest corner of the napkin appear to be lifted, under which his wonderful talents had lain concealed."

Shepherd. Puir Pultusky!

North. A simple soul!

Shepherd. Amaist an Innocent! Yet what wut! Here it is—for his sake I'll chant it affetuosy—amaist lakrimoso—for I see the Doctor sitting afore me as distinct in his drollness, as if in the flesh.

THE FIVE CHAMPIONS OF MAGA.

A SONG BY THE LATE DR SCOTT.

(*As sung by the Ettrick Shepherd, at the Noctes Ambrosianæ, with the usual applause.*)

I.

There once was an Irishman, and he was very fat;
He wore a wig upon his head, and on his wig a hat:
The Cockneys, in his presence, ceased to gibe at North and Hogg, sir,
Bekaise he gave them blarney, and bother'd them with brogue, sir.
Och! by my *sowl*, this Irishman most sturdily attack would
Whoever dared to sport his *chaff*, or run a-muck at *Blackwood*.

II.

There once was a Scotchman, and he was very lean;
A prettier man in philibegs was nowhere to be seen:
For fighting in the cause of Kit, he was a perfect satyr;
Upon the Whiggish ranks he rush'd, and spilt their blood like water.
Though wanting "*inexpressibles*," he constantly attack would,
With fury *inexpressible*, the enemies of *Blackwood*.

III.

There once was an Englishman, and he was very short;
For every mutton-chop he ate he swigg'd a quart of port.
Of Tickler, Mullion, North, and Hogg, he did nought but dream all night, sir,
And in the daytime, for their cause, he nothing did but fight, sir.
Whigs, Cockneys, Revolutionists, he furiously attack would,
And floor them with his *bunch of fives*—this champion stout of *Blackwood*.

IV.

There once was a Welshman, and he was very tall;
When North's opponents heard his voice, they looked out for a squall:
In Maga's cause he was as fierce as General Napper-Tandy;
All foemen were alike to him—the bully or the dandy—

He thrash'd them right, he thrash'd them left, their hurdies he attack would,
With Christopher's own potent knout—in honour all of *Blackwood.*

v.

There onee was a Yankee, and he was very sage,
Who 'gainst the foes of Christopher a bloody war did wage;
Those who his rifle to escape were so exceeding lucky,
Ran off, I guess, and hid themselves in Erie and Kentucky.
The Cherokees and Chickasaws he furiously attack would,
And shoot their chiefs and kiss their squaws, if they spoke ill of *Blackwood.*

North. Next time you pay me a visit, James, at No. 99[1]—I'll show you THE PICTURE.

Shepherd. I understaun' you, sir—Titian's Venus — or is't his Danaw yielding to her yellow Jupiter victorious in a shower o' gold? O the selfish hizzie!

North. James, such subjects——

Shepherd. You had better, sir, no say anither syllable about them—it may answer verra weel for an auld bachelor like you, sir, to keep that sort o' a serawlio, naked limmers in iles, a shame to ony honest canvass, whatever may hae been the genius o' the Penter that sent them sprawling here; but as for me, I'm a married man, and——

North. My dear James, you are under a gross delusion——

Shepherd. It's nae delusion. Nae pictur o' the sort, na, no e'en although ane o' the greatest o' the auld Maisters, sall ever hang on ma wa's—I should be ashamed to look the servant lassies in the face when they come into soop the floor or ripe the ribs——

North (*rising with dignity*). No picture, sir, shall ever hang on my walls, on which *her* eye might not dwell——

Shepherd. Mrs Gentle! a bit dainty body — wi' a' the modesty, and without ony o' the demureness, o' the Quaker leddie; and as for yon pictur o' her aboon the brace-piece o' your Sanctum, by Sir Thomas Lawrence——

North. John Watson Gordon, if you please, my dear James.

Shepherd. It has the face o' an angel.

North (*sitting down with dignity*). I was about to ask you,

[1] No. 99 Moray Place was Christopher's *imaginary* residence in Edinburgh. No. 6 Gloucester Place was his real abode.

James, to come and see my last work—my master-piece—my chef-d'œuvre——

Shepherd. The subjeck?

North. The Defence of Socrates.

Shepherd. A noble subjeck indeed, sir, and weel adapted for your high intellectual and moral genie.

North. My chief object, James, has been to represent the character of Socrates. I have conceived of that character, as one in which unshaken strength of high and clear Intellect—and a moral Will fortified against all earthly trials—sublime and pure—were both subordinate to the principle of Love.

Shepherd. Gude, sir,—gude. He was the Freen o' Man.

North. I felt a great difficulty in my art, James—from the circumstances purely historical—that neither the figure nor the countenance of Socrates were naturally commanding——

Shepherd. An' hae ye conquered it to your satisfaction, sir?

North. I have. Another difficulty met me too, James, in this—that in his mind there was a cast of intellect—a play of comic wit—inseparable from his discourse—and which must not be forgotten in any representation of it.

Shepherd. Profoond as true.

North. To give dignity and beauty to the expression of features, and a figure of which the form was neither dignified nor beautiful, was indeed a severe trial for the power of art.

Shepherd. An' hae you conquered it too, sir?

North. Most successfully. In the countenance, therefore, my dear James, to answer to what I have assigned as the highest principle in the character, Love, there is a prevailing character of gentleness—the calm of that unalterable mind has taken the appearance of a celestial serenity—an expression caught, methinks, from the peaceful heart of the unclouded sky brooding in love over rejoicing nature.

Shepherd. That's richt, sir.

North. Such expression I have breathed over the forehead, the lips, and the eyes; yet is there not wanting either the grandeur, nor the fire, nor the power of intellect, nor the boldness of conscious innocence.

Shepherd. I'll come and see't, sir, the morn's mornin,[1] afore breakfast. Fowre eggs.

North. That one purpose I have pursued and fulfilled by the expression of all the Groups in the piece.

[1] *The morn's mornin*—to-morrow morning.

Shepherd. Naething in pentin kitlier than groopin.

North. You behold a prevalent expression of Love in the countenance of his friends and followers—of love greater than even reverence, admiration, sorrow, anxiety, and fear!

Shepherd. Though doutless a' thae emotions, too, will be expressed—and familiar hae they been to you, sir, through the coorse o' a strangely chequered though not unhappy life.

North. Then, too, James, have I had to express—and I have expressed it—the habitual character belonging to many there—besides the expression of the moment; countenances of generous, loving, open-souled youth; middle-aged men of calm benign aspect, but not without earnest thought; and not unconspicuous, one aged man, James, almost the counterpart of Socrates himself, only without his high intellectual power, a face composed, I may almost say, of peace, the only one of all perfectly untroubled.

Shepherd. That's an expressive thought, sir—and it's original—that's to say, it never occurred to me afore you mentioned it.

North. He, like Socrates, reconciled to that certain death, familiar with the looks of the near term of life, and not without hopes beyond it.

Shepherd. Believed thae sages, think ye, sir, in the immortality o' the sowl.

North. I think, James, that they did—assuredly Socrates.

Shepherd. I'm glad o't for their sakes, though they hae a' been dead for thousan's o' years.

North. Then, James, how have I managed his judges?

Shepherd. Hoo?

North. In all their faces, with many expressions, there is one expression — answering to the predominant disposition assigned to the character of Socrates—the expression of Malignity towards Love.

Shepherd. You've hit it, sir; you've hit it. Here's your health.

North. An expression of malignity in some almost lost on a face of timidity, fear, or awe, in others blended almost brutally with impenetrable ignorance.[1]

[1] North might have taken some hints for his picture from Plato's *Dialogue of Euthyphron*, in which Socrates describes his accuser, Meletus, as a person "with long straight hair, a scanty beard, and a hooked nose.

Shepherd. That comes o' studyin the Passions. I think but little noo o' Collins's Odd.

North. Then, James, I have given the countenances of the people.

Shepherd. A fickle people—ever ready to strike doun offensive Virtue—and ever as ready to shed tears o' overactin remorse on her ashes!

North. In the countenances of the people, James, I have laboured long, but succeeded methinks at last, in personifying as it were the Vices which drove them on to sacrifice the father of the city—to dim the eye and silence the tongue of Athens, who was herself the soul of Greece.

Shepherd. A gran' idea, sir—and natural as gran'—ane that could only visit the sowl o' a great Maister.

North. There you see anger, wrath, rage, hatred, spite, envy, jealousy, exemplified in many different natures. That Figure, prominent in the hardened pride of intellect, with his evil nature scowling through, eyeing Socrates with malignant, stern, and deadly revenge—is the King of the Sophists.

Shepherd. About to re-erect his Throne, as he hopes, on the ruins o' that Natural Theology which Socrates taught the heathens.

North. You see then, James,—you feel that the purpose of the painter on the whole picture, has been to express, as I said, his conception of the character of Socrates—a various and manifold reflection of one image; but the image itself, giving the same due proportion,—where Love sits on the height of moral and intellectual power, and Intellect in their triple union, though strong in its own character, is yet subordinate to Both.

Shepherd. What a pictur it maun be, if the execution be equal to the design!

North. Many conceptions, my dear James, troubled my imagination, before, in the steadfastness of my delight in Love, I finally fixed upon this—which I humbly hope the world "will not willingly let die."

Shepherd. It's the same way wi' poems. They aye turn out at last something seemingly quite different frae the origination form—but it's no sae—for a spirit o' the same divine sameness breathes throughout, though ye nae langer ken the bit bonny bud in "the bricht consummate flower."

North. In one sketch—I will make you a present of it, my dear James——

Shepherd. Thank ye, sir—thank ye;—you're really ower kind—ower gude to your Shepherd; but dinna forget, sir—see that you dinna forget—for you'll pardon me for hintin that sometimes promises o' that sort slip your memory——

North. In one sketch, James, I have represented Socrates speaking—and I found it more difficult to give the character of the principal figure—because the fire of discourse, of necessity, gave a disproportionate force to the intellectual expression; while again, I found it easier to give the character of all the rest, who looked upon Socrates, under the power of his eloquence, simply commanding, with almost an undivided expression, in which individual character was either lost or subdued.

Shepherd. Never mind—send me the Sketch.

North. I will—and another. For, again, I chose that moment when, having closed his defence, Socrates stands looking upon the consulting judges, and awaiting their decision.

Shepherd. Oh! sir! and that was a time when his ain character, methinks, micht wi' mair ease be most beautifully expressed!

North. Most true. But then, the divided and conflicting expression of all the other figures, some turned on the judges with scrutinising eagerness, to read the decision before it was on their lips—some certain of the result—looking on Socrates—or on the judges—with what different states of soul! These, James, I found difficult indeed to manage, and to bring them all under the one expression, which in that sketch too, as in my large picture, it was my aim to breathe over the canvass.

Shepherd. You maun try, sir, to mak a feenished pictur frae that sketch, sir—you maun indeed, sir. I'll lend it to you for that purpose—and no grudge 't though ye keep it in your ain possession till next year.

North. I have not only made a sketch of another design, James, but worked in some of the colours.

Shepherd. The dead colours?

North. No—colours already instinct with life. I have chosen that calmer time when, after the pronouncing of the sentence,

Socrates resumes his discourse—you may read it, James, in that divine dialogue of Plato[1]——

Shepherd. But I'm no great haun at the Greek.

North. Use Floyer Sydenham's translation, or—let me see—has he done that dialogue? Take then that noble old man's, Taylor of Norwich. Socrates resumes his discourse, and declares his satisfaction in death, and his trust in immortality. A moment, indeed, for the sublime in art, but affording to the painter opportunity for a different purpose from that which was mine in my great picture. For in this sketch, instead of intending, as my principal and paramount object, the representation of individual historical character—I have designed to express—rather—the Power among men of the sublime Spirit of their being—exemplified among a people dark with idolatry—using the historical subject as subservient to this my purpose—inasmuch as it shows a single mind raised up by the force of this feeling above nature—yea, shows the power of that feeling within that one mind, resting in awe upon a great multitude of men. For, surely, my dear James, it is not to be believed that at that moment, one countenance would preserve unchanged its bitter hostility, when revenge was in part defeated by seeing triumph arise out of doom—when malignant hate had got its victim—and when murder, that had struck its blow, might begin to feel its heart open to the terror of remorse.

Shepherd. My dear Mr North, gie me baith your twa hauns. That's richt. Noo that I hae shucken, and noo that I hae squozen them in my ain twa nieves no unlike a vice, though you're no the king upon the throne, wi' a golden croon on his head, and a sceptre in his haun—that's King William the Fourth, God bless him—yet you *are* a king; and, as a loyal subject, loyal but no servile, for never was a slave born i' the Forest, here do I, James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, kneel doun on ae knee—thus—and kiss the richt haun o' King Kit.

[*The* Shepherd *drops on his knee—does as he says, in spite of* North's *struggles to hinder him—rises—wipes the dust from his pans—and resumes his seat.*

North. "How many of my poorest subjects," James, "are now asleep!" Look at Tickler.

Tickler. Asleep! Broad-awake as the Baltic in a blast.

[1] The *Phaedon.*

But when under the power of Eloquence, I always sit with my eyes shut.

Shepherd. But what for snore? Hae ye nae mercy on the sick man through the partition?

North. After Painting, let us have some Politics.

Shepherd. Na—na—na—na—na! Come, Mr Tickler, gie's a sang—to the fiddle. See hoo your Cremona is smilin on you to haunle her frae her peg.

[*The* SHEPHERD *takes down the celebrated Cremona from the wall, and, after tuning it, gives it to* TICKLER.

Tickler (*attempting a prelude*). Shade of Stabilini! heard'st thou ever grated such harsh discord as this? 'Tis like a litter of pigs. [TICKLER *tunes his instrument.*

Shepherd. Oh, for Geordie Cruckshanks! "TICKLER AT THE TUNING!" What for, Mr North, dinna ye get Geordie to invent a Series o' Illustrations o' the Noctes, and publish a Selection in four volumms octawvo?

North. Wait, James, till "one with moderate haste might count a HUNDRED."

Shepherd. What if we're a' dead?

North. The world will go on without us.

Shepherd. Ay—but never sae weel again. The verra earth will feel a dirl at her heart, and pause for a moment pensively on her ain axis.

(*Tickler sings to an accompaniment of his own composition for the Cremona.*)

DEMOS.

My song is of *Demos*,[1] our well-meaning friend,
Who lately was leading a peaceable life,
But now is so changed, that there's really no end
To his love of commotion, disturbance, and strife:
He's got such strange fancies and whims in his head,
And shows them so strangely wherever he goes,
That I fear he requires to be physic'd and bled,
For the more he is humour'd, the wilder he grows.

Thus *abroad*, he again has insanely begun
The career that once led him to sorrow and shame:
And madly exulting in what he has done,
He thinks his own echo the trumpet of Fame:

[1] *Demos*—the people.

He blusters, and bullies, and brags of it so,
Yet mimics so strangely the land of the free,
That you'd almost suppose he intended to show
How truly absurd even *Freedom* can be!

There in heavy Holland, where a sceptre of lead,
By nature should hold its Bœotian reign,
He vows he must have the French bayonet instead,
Just to keep his own pond'rous posteriors in pain!
He sets fire to his house—he abandons his trade—
He perplexes his person with warlike array,
And fearlessly tells us he is not afraid,
And will never submit to *legitimate* sway!

Then *at home* he despises the old-fashion'd air
Of the vessel that's weather'd so many a storm,
And tells all the crew that they now must prepare
For a work of destruction, which he calls *Reform:*
And much do I fear that the crew must submit,
And yield to a blast that so fiercely prevails,
For the Devil himself at the helm seems to sit,
While Beelzebub's busy in filling the sails!

Oh, Demos! thy madness is madness indeed,
As all will admit, in that ill-omen'd hour,
When, from Princes, from Priests, and from Principles freed,
You become the first victim of this your own power!
For, trust me, my friend, you have merely to taste
The sweets of your own *Il*-legitimate sway,
To mourn o'er the path that can ne'er be retraced,
And curse the false friends that have led you astray!

Shepherd. Soun' doctrine weel sung. Mr North, when ma lug's in for music, I aye like to hear't flowin, if no in a continuous strain, yet just, as a body micht say, wi' nae langer interruption than ane micht toddle ower a bit green knowe, and come down on anither murmur in the hollow, as sweet and clear as that he has left!

North. After such an image, James, how can I refuse?

Shepherd. Here's your herp, sir.

[North *receives from the hand of the* Shepherd *perhaps the finest-toned Welsh harp in the world—the gift of Owen Evans of Penmanmawr.*

North. The air, you know, is my own, James. I shall sing it to-night to some beautiful words by my friend Robert Folke-

stone Williams[1] — written, he tells me, expressly for the Noctes.

Oh! fill the wine-cup high,
The sparkling liquor pour;
For we will care and grief defy,
They ne'er shall plague us more.
And ere the snowy foam
From off the wine departs,
The precious draught shall find a home,
A dwelling in our hearts.

Though bright may be the beams
That woman's eyes display;
They are not like the ruby gleams
That in our goblets play.
For though surpassing bright
Their brilliancy may be,
Age dims the lustre of their light,
But adds more worth to thee.

Give me another draught,
The sparkling, and the strong;
He who would learn the poet craft—
He who would shine in song—
Should pledge the flowing bowl
With warm and generous wine;
'Twas wine that warm'd Anacreon's soul,
And made his songs divine.

And e'en in tragedy,
Who lives that never knew
The honey of the Attic Bee
Was gather'd from thy dew?
He of the tragic muse,
Whose praises bards rehearse;
What power but thine could e'er diffuse
Such sweetness o'er his verse?

Oh! would that I could raise
The magic of that tongue;
The spirit of those deathless lays,
The Swan of Teios sung!

[1] "Robert Folkestone Williams, author of the *Youth of Shakespeare*, *Shakespeare and his Friends*, and other works of romantic fiction."—*American Editor.*

Each song the bard has given,
Its beauty and its worth,
Sounds sweet as if a voice from heaven
Was echoed upon earth.

How mighty—how divine,
Thy spirit seemeth when
The rich draught of the purple vine
Dwelt in these godlike men.
It made each glowing page,
Its eloquence, and truth,
In the glory of their golden age,
Outshine the fire of youth.

Joy to the lone heart—joy
To the desolate—oppress'd,
For wine can every grief destroy,
That gathers in the breast.
The sorrows, and the care,
That in our hearts abide,
'Twill chase them from their dwellings there,
To drown them in its tide.

And now the heart grows warm,
With feelings undefined,
Throwing their deep diffusive charm
O'er all the realms of mind.
The loveliness of truth
Flings out its brightest rays,
Clothed in the songs of early youth,
Or joys of other days.

We think of her, the young,
The beautiful, the bright;
We hear the music of her tongue,
Breathing its deep delight.
We see again each glance,
Each bright and dazzling beam,
We feel our throbbing hearts still dance—
We live but in a dream.

From darkness, and from woe,
A power like lightning darts;
A glory cometh down to throw
Its shadow o'er our hearts.

And dimm'd by falling tears,
A spirit seems to rise,
That shows the friend of other years
Is mirror'd in our eyes.

But sorrow, grief, and care,
Had dimm'd his setting star ;
And we think with tears of those that *were*,
To smile on those that *are*.
Yet though the grassy mound
Sits lightly on his head,
We'll pledge, in solemn silence round,
THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD !

The sparkling juice now pour,
With fond and liberal hand ;
Oh ! raise the laughing rim once more—
Here's to our FATHER LAND !
Up, every soul that hears,
Hurrah ! with three times three ;
And shout aloud, with deafening cheers,
The "ISLAND OF THE FREE."

Then fill the wine-cup high,
The sparkling liquor pour ;
For we will care and grief defy,
They ne'er shall plague us more.
And ere the snowy foam
From off the wine departs,
The precious draught shall find a home,
A dwelling in our hearts.

Shepherd. Very gude—excellent—beautifu' ! I thocht at ae time it was gaun to be ower lang—and aiblins it micht be sae—at least for a sang—unner ither circumstances—but *here—noo—wi' your vice an' herp*, it was ower sune ower—and here's to the health o' your freen, Robert Folkstone Williams—and may he be here to sing't himsel some nicht. Ken ye onything about American Poetry, Mr North ?

North. Not so much as I could wish. Would all the living best American bards send me over copies of their works, I should do them justice. I respect—nay I admire that people, James ; though perhaps they don't know it. Yet I know less of their Poetry than their Politics, and of them not much——

Tickler. How Jonathan Jeremy-Diddlers our Ministries! "Have you got such a thing as a half-crown about you?" And B flat, obedient to A sharp, shells out the ready rhino from his own impoverished exchequer into that of his "Transatlantic brother," overflowing with dollars.

Shepherd. But the little you do ken o' their poetry, let's hear't.

North. I have lately looked over—in three volumes—*Specimens of American Poetry, with Critical and Biographical Notices*, and have met with many most interesting little poems, and passages of poems. The editor has been desirous of showing what had been achieved under the inspiration of the American Muses before the days of Irving and Cooper, Pierpont and Percival, and thinks, rightly, that the lays of the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, the poets of the Western World, are as likely to bear some characteristic traits of national or individual character, as those of the Minnesingers and Trouveurs—or the "Gongorism of the Castilian rhymesters of old."

Shepherd. Gongorism.[1] What's that?

North. Accordingly, he goes as far back as 1612, and gives us a pretty long poem, called "Contemplations" by Anne Bradstreet, daughter of one Governor of Massachusetts Colony, and wife of another, who seems to have been a fine spirit.

Shepherd. Was she, sir?

North. She is said to have been "a woman honoured and esteemed, where she lived, for her gracious demeanour, her eminent parts, her pious conversation, her virtuous disposition, her exact diligence in her place, and discreet managing of her family occasions; and more so, these poems are the fruits but of some few hours curtailed from her sleep, and other refreshments."

Shepherd. Then Anne Bradstreet, sir, *was* a fine spirit! Just like a' our ain poetesses—in England and Scotland—married or no married *yet*—and och! och! och! hoo unlike to her and them the literary limmers o' France, rougin and leerin on their spinnle-shanked lovers, that mann hae loathed the sicht and the smell o' them, starin and stinkin their way to the grave!

[1] Louis de Gongora, a Spanish poet, born 1561, was the founder of a school of fantastical rhymsters, called Gongorists.

Tickler. James!

North. The celebrated Cotton Mather——

Shepherd. Ay, I ken about him—born about fifty years after that date—the great mover in the mysterious matter o' the Salem witchcraft.[1]

North. He says that "her poems, eleven times printed, have afforded a plentiful entertainment unto the ingenious, and a monument for her memory beyond the stateliest marbles." And the learned and excellent Norton of Ipswich——

Shepherd. I kenna him——

North. ——calls her "The mirror of her age, and glory of her sex."

Shepherd. Recolleck ye ony verses o' her contemplations?

North. Anne is walking in her contemplations through a wood, and she saith—

"While musing thus, with contemplation fed,
And thousand fancies buzzing in my brain,
The sweet-tongued Philomel perch'd o'er my head,
And chanted forth a most melodious strain,
Which rapt me so with wonder and delight,
I judged my hearing better than my sight,
And wish'd me wings with her a while to take my flight.

"'O Merry Bird!' said I, 'that fears no snares,
That neither toils, nor hoards up in thy barns,
Feels no sad thought, nor cruciating cares
To gain more good, or shun what might thee harm;
Thy clothes ne'er wear, thy meat is everywhere,
Thy bed a bough, thy drink the water clear,
Remind'st not what is past, nor what's to come dost fear.

The dawning morn with songs thou dost prevent,
Set'st hundred notes unto thy feather'd crew,
So each one tunes his pretty instrument,
And warbling out the old, begins anew;
And thus they pass their youth in summer season,
Then follow thee into a better region,
Where winter's never felt by that sweet airy legion!'"

[1] Cotton Mather, D.D., was born at Boston in 1663, and died in 1728. He wrote *An Ecclesiastical History of England,* and *The Wonders of the Invisible World, or the Trials of Witches.*

Shepherd. Oh! man, but they're bonny, incorrect, sweet, simple lines thae—and after sic a life as Anne Bradstreet led, can there be ony doubt that she is in heaven?

North. In my mind none. Nearly a hundred years after the birth—and nearly forty after the death of Anne Bradstreet—was born in Boston, Jane Colman, daughter of a clergyman, who was a school companion of Cotton Mather. At eleven, she used to correspond with her worthy father in verse—on entering her nineteenth year, she married a Mr Turel of Medford——

Shepherd. Hoo can ye remember names in that wonnerfu' way, sir? And yet you say ye hae nae memory? You forget naething.

North. ——and died, James, in 1735, at the age of twenty-seven, "having faithfully fulfilled those duties which shed the brightest lustre on woman's name—the duties of the friend, the daughter, the mother, and the wife."

Shepherd. Hae ye ony o' her verses by heart, sir?

North. A paraphrase of a Psalm you know well——

Shepherd. I ken weel a' the Psalms.

North. The following flows plaintively—

"From hearts oppress'd with grief, did they require
A sacred anthem on the sounding lyre:
Come now, they cry, regale us with a song—
Music and mirth the fleeting hours prolong.
Shall Babel's daughter hear that blessed sound?
Shall songs divine be sung in heathen ground?
No! Heaven forbid that we should tune our voice,
Or touch the lyre, while—slaves—we can't rejoice!
O Palestine! our once so dear abode!
Thou once wert blest with peace, and loved of God;
But now art desolate! a barren waste!
Thy fruitful fields by thorns and woods disgraced.
If I forget Judea's mournful land,
May nothing prosper that I take in hand!
Or if I string my lyre, or tune my voice,
Till thy deliverance call me to rejoice;
O may my tongue forget the art to move,
And may I never more my speech improve!
Return, O Lord! avenge us of our foes,
Destroy the men that up against us rose!

Let Edom's sons thy just displeasure know,
And let them serve, like us, some foreign foe,
In distant realms—far from their native home,
To which dear seat, O! never let them come!"

Shepherd. I daursay, gin I could get the soun' o' our ain mournfu' auld version out o' ma heart, that I sud like the lines unco weel—she maun hae been a gentle cretur.

North. I mentioned, James, that she and her father used to correspond——

Shepherd. After her marriage?

North. Before and after—and in one of his letters—which I think must have been addressed to her *before*—before living with her husband at Medford—alluding to her having, in her paraphrase, said—

"No helper in the waste and barren ground,
Only a mournful willow wither'd there,"

her father writes to her thus—Strange, is it not, that part of his letter should be read at a Noctes!

Shepherd. I think I see him mendin his pen in his study at Boston, New England, America, ae forenoon about Twal o'clock, on the 21st January o' 1731—preceesely a hunder years!

North. The affectionate father says, "This serious melancholy Psalm is well turned by you in most parts of it, considering your years and advantages for such a performance. You speak of a single withered willow which they hung their harps on; but Euphrates was covered with willows along the banks of it, so that it has been called the river of willows. I hope, my dear, your lyre will not be hung on such a sorrowful shrub. Go on in sacred songs, and we'll hang it on the stately cedars of Lebanon, or let the pleasant elm before the door where you are suffice for you."

Shepherd. The pious pride o' paternal affection!

North. Jane Colman, during her eight years of wedded life, was no doubt happy—and in a calm spirit of happiness must have indited the soft, sweet, and simple close of an imitation of Horace.

Shepherd. O' Horace! Could she read Latin?

North. Why not? Daughter—wife—of a clergyman?

"No stately beds my humble roof adorn,
No costly purple, by carved panthers borne;
Nor can I boast Arabia's rich perfumes,
Diffusing odours through our stately rooms;
For me no fair Egyptian plies the loom,
But my fine linen all is made at home.
Though I no down or tapestry should spread,
A clean soft pillow shall support your head,
Fill'd with the wool from off my tender sheep,
On which with ease and safety you may sleep.
The nightingale shall lull you to your rest,
And all be calm and still as is your breast!"

Shepherd. Far mair simplicity o' langage seem to hae had the young leddies o' New England in thae days, sir, than them o' Auld England o' the present age.—Come doun some half-century still nearer us, and fin' you ony virgin or wife o' poetical genie at that pint o' time!

North. I come down to 1752, and find Ann Eliza Schuyler, the daughter of Mr Brandt Schuyler, New York. At seventeen she was married to Mr Bleeker of New Rochelle, and removed with him to Tomhanick, a beautiful solitary village, eighteen miles above Albany. There they passed several years, we are told, in the unbroken quiet of the wilderness; but then, were driven from the repose of that beautiful and romantic spot by the savages in alliance with Burgoyne. On their way from Albany, down the Hudson, they were forced to go ashore by the illness of their youngest daughter, where the poor creature died. Soon after, the capture of Burgoyne—(an unfortunate soldier, but a most accomplished man—witness his celebrated comedy, "The Heiress")—allowed them to return to their retreat in the country; but the loss of her daughter made so deep an impression on her mind, that the mother never recovered her former happiness. A few years afterwards, her husband, when assisting his men in taking in the harvest, was surprised by a party of the enemy from Canada, and carried off prisoner. The shock which she received was so great, that her health was gone for ever; and though her husband was soon rescued from thraldom, and

they, after a visit to their friends in New York, returned to Tomhanick, there she shortly died, in the thirty-first year of her age.

Shepherd. And is her poetry as interesting as her life?

North. I have seen but little of it, and wish the editor of the *Specimens* had given us more; for he well observes, that a female cultivating the elegant arts of refined society at the *Ultima Thule* of civilised life, in regions of savage wildness, and among scenes of alarm, desolation, and blood, is a striking spectacle.

Tickler (*as the timepiece smites Twelve*). A striking spectacle indeed!

(*Enter* PICARDY *and Tail, with all the substantialities of the season.*)

Shepherd. I maun hear mair frae you, sir, anither time, about these American poetesses. Ony flourishing at this day?—Eh! Eh! What'n a guse!

North. Several, James.

Shepherd. What? Severals. Mr Awmrose—Dinna bring in a single ither guse, till we hae despatched our freen at the head o' the table.—Mr Tickler, whare'll ye sit? and what'ill ye eat? and what'ill ye drink? and what'ill ye want to hear? and what'ill ye want to say? For oh, sir! you've been pleesant the nicht—in ane o' your lown, but no seelent humours.

Tickler. The legs.

Shepherd. Baith?

Tickler. Do you mean to insult me? Certainly—both.

Shepherd. I've sprained ma thooms. Sae tak him to yoursel, and—— [SHEPHERD *shoves over the goose to* TICKLER.

North. Help yourself first, James.

Shepherd. Be easy, sir, on ma accoont. Alloo me to gie you some slices o' the breist aff ma ain plate, Mr North, I've never touched them——

North. Do, James.

Shepherd. Na, niffer[1] plates at ance—though yours is clean, and mine soomin wi' sappy shavins aff the bonny bosom o' the best bird that ever waddled among stubble.

[SHEPHERD *insists on* NORTH *exchanging trenchers.*

[1] *Niffer*—exchange.

North. You know the way, James, to the old man's heart.

Shepherd. It's like the grave. What for? 'Cause the "paths o' glory lead" till it! Thank ye, Tickler, for the twa spauls.

[SHEPHERD, *with infinite alacrity and address, forks both legs with the same instrument, and leaves* TICKLER *desolate.*

Tickler—

Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare!
Robb'd of a goose, I yet may share the feast.
Close by the regal chair,
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.

Ambrose—a goose!—a goose!—my kingdom for a goose,—and, Tappie! pot o' pota!

Shepherd. Gurney! Gurney! Guse, man, guse, ane's gane and anither's comin—guse, man—Gurney—guse, guse, guse!

[GURNEY *appears, and the Noctes vanish.*

XXIX.

(MARCH 1831.)

Scene,—The Snuggery. Time,—Nine o'clock.

North, Shepherd, Tickler.

Shepherd. The Snuggery, sir, has a power o' contraction an' expansion that never belonged afore to ony room in this sublunary world. Let the pairty be three or thretty, it accommodates its dimensions to the gatherin—still the Snuggery, though the Saloon.

North. I hope you approve of the Busts, James?—among the finest of Macdonald's.

Shepherd. Life-in-death Eemages! A' busts, methinks, are solemn—as for thae, they are shooblime. Wha's that aboon your head, sir?

North. Socrates.

Shepherd. The Christopher North o' the ancient, as you are the Socrates o' the modern Athens. Baith o' you by natur, as may be read in your fizonomies, wi' a strang bias to animal—to sensual indulgences; an' baith o' you, by means o' self-study and self-government, pure in conduct, in heart, and in haun, as ony philosopher that ever strengthened, by his practice, his theory o' truth. Oh! sir, but the Sophists hate you wi' a malignant hatred—and fain would they condemn you to drink the hemlock, ay, out o' that verra punch-bowl, the dolphin himsel——

North. I have an antidote against all poison, James——

Shepherd. What is't.

North. Hush. An herb of sovereign virtue, gathered on the Sacred Mountains.

Shepherd. Wha's the Eemage atower ma pow?

North. Wordsworth—the Plato of poetry.

Shepherd. Bee't sae. I seldom read Plawto.

Tickler. Here we are once more, James—the Knights of St Ambrose——

Shepherd. An admirable, but an indescribable set o'——

Tickler. Satirists, caricaturists, madcaps, harebrains, bee-in-the-bonnets, scape-goats, scape-graces, idlers, dreamers, loungers, ramblers, spectators, tatlers, amateurs, cognoscenti, artists, poets, painters, sculptors, novelists, critics, politicians, physicians, theologians, metaphysicians, statesmen, saints, sinners, heroes, patriots, martyrs——

Shepherd. Mankind's Epitome.

North. Our orgies, James, have thrown their share of light on human life.

Tickler. That motley masquerade called human life!

North. In which, here and elsewhere, we have contrived, not discreditably, to support our characters. I hope, my dear James, that you sometimes think of Ambrose's, when going out to meditate at eventide by the shores of St Mary's Loch, or up away yonder to the Loch of the Lowes, where, when stillness steeps the solitude, you even hear the Grey Mare's Tail——

Shepherd. Whuskin through the wild, wi' an eerie sugh, till again a' is hushed as death—ay, as the verra grave.

Tickler. Think you sometimes of us, then, James?

Shepherd. I hae startled to hear that Time-piece smiting the hour in the wilderness; and a' at ance hae believed mysel in the heart o' Embro'—here in the Snuggery—wi' your twa endless legs, Mr Tickler, emblems o' infinitude and eternity, stretched awa intil the regions ahint the grate, far ayont the bounds o' this "visible diurnal sphere," and creawtin superstitious terrors in the inhabitants o' Sawturn.

North. Tickler?

Shepherd. Oh, sir! how many tailors are for how many years, night and day employed, without respect to Sabbaths, in gettin up for you ae pair o' leggins?[1]

Tickler. You are pleased to be facetious, sir.

Shepherd. Maist facetious—but it's no in the poo'r o' mortal man to do justice to the subjeck.

North. You do, however, my dear Shepherd, sometimes think of us in the Forest?

[1] *Leggins*—long gaiters, reaching up to the knees.

Shepherd. Hoo thochts and feelings, sir, do arise, and follow ane anither in the sowl, like flocks o' birds frae distant regions, and disappearing ahint the lift intil distant regions, flocks after flocks, withouten end, sometimes in wintry weather, when flakes are visibly augmenting the snaw-wreaths, and sometimes in autumn, when the leaves are rustlin to the bit robin-red-breast——

North. What imagery!

Shepherd. ——preparin, ere lang, to flit doun the glen, and tak up his domicile amang the dwellins o' us Christian creturs, that never grudge our crumbs to the birdie, safe in his scarlet shield frae the verra cats, wha, for fear o' the weans, daurna touch a feather, by love and pity consecrated ever sin' the burial o' the Babes in the Wood——

North. A story that, in its touching simplicity, would almost seem to have been written, prophetically, for *Blackwood's Magazine.*

Shepherd. It's an out-o'-the-way place, the Forest, sirs, though a great road rins through't; for it's no easy to break the charm o' the seelence and the solitariness o' natur. A great road rins through't; but aften hae I sat on a knowe commanding miles o't, and no ae single speck astir, far as the ee could reach—no a single speck, but aiblins a sheep crossin, or a craw alichtin, or an auld crouchin beggar-woman, that ye thocht was leanin motionless on her stick, till, by-and-by, ye discerned the colour o' her red cloak, and a gey while afterwards, saw, rather than heard her, prayin for an awmous, wi' shrivelled hauns faulded on her breast, or in their palsy held up heavenwards, sae beseechingly as to awauken charity in a meeser's heart!

North. But no miser, James, art thou—though but a poor man, thou hast "a hand open as day to melting charity."

Shepherd. What Heaven has been pleased to give me o' this life's needments, o' that I never grudged a share to ony son or dochter o' affliction.

North. True as holy writ.

Shepherd. And holy writ it was that taucht me—for our natur, sir, is selfish, and it's my belief that mony and mony a time wad the best o' us neglect the commonest duties o' humanity, if it werena for religion. We hae a', at times, hard cauld hearts; and I dinna scruple to confess that I've felt my

anger risin at beggars—even at auld bowed-down widow-beggars—when three or fowre o' them in the course o' a lang simmer day hae come creepin in succession, at a snail's pace, in at the yett, and then taken their station at the verra parlour-window, wi' a sort o' meek obstinacy and wae-begone dourness that wadna understand the repulse o' neglect, or even o' a waff o' the haun to be awa wi' theirsels—when suddenly some holy text has been revivified in my heart, perhaps that ane tellin o' the widow and her mite, and a' at ance, as if an angel had jogged my elbow, I hae ca'd the puir auld body in; and then to be sure the wife hersel wasna slaw, without waitin for a word frae me, to come wi' her ain twa comely hauns fu' o' meal, and empty them tidily intil the wallet, no unobserved, sir, by Him wha taught us to say, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Tickler. Yes, my dear James, the blessing of many a wayfaring man and woman——

Shepherd. Wi' troops o' weans——

Tickler. ——has been on Mount Benger.

Shepherd. It needed them a', for it's a gey cauld place staunin yonner on a knowe in a funnel, in the thoroughfare o' a perpetual sugh. Yet 'twas cheerfu' in the sun-glints, and hallowed be the chaumer in which my bairns were born! Howsomever, we're fully as comfortable noo at Altrive Lake—a far lowner spat—and yon nyuck o' the garden, wi' the bit bourtree[1]-bower, oh, sir! but it's an inspirin retreat frae the din and daffin o' the weans, for the inditin o' a bit cheerfu' or pensie[2] sang! Sometimes, indeed, wee Jamie fin's me out, and thrusts the sweet lauchin face o' him through the thornless branches, to frichten me, as he thinks—God bless the bonny bogle!—but I scald him aff wi' a pretended anger, and a froon fu' o' luve, and awa veers he through amang the flowers like a butterfly, while out o' my heart gushes the sang like a shower-swollen stream.

Tickler. Childless Eld feels as if he were a father, James, at such a picture.

Shepherd. You and Mr North should baith marry yet. Indeed Mrs Gentle maun be——

North. James! (*Putting his finger to his lips.*)

Shepherd. Forgie me, sir.

[1] *Bourtree*—alder-tree.

[2] *Pensie*—pensive.

North. Have you read the last number of the *Quarterly Review*, James?

Shepherd. Na. It hasna come our length yet.

North. 'Tis therein said, James, that in these our Noctes you are absurdly represented as a "boozing buffoon."[1]

Shepherd. What? In the *Quarterly?* Na, na, sir. I can swallow a gude deal frae you—but that's bacon I canna bolt. The yeditor kens better—for——

North. But, like other editors, James, he sometimes naps when he should only be nodding, and sometimes nods when he should be broad awake as a full north-west moon.

Shepherd. Eh?

North. Some hypocritical humbug has had the audacity, however, to palm that falsehood upon our dozing friend, and, through him, on the Pensive Public;—some brainless big-wig, who believes that the Baltic has been drunk half dry by a whale.

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw! haw!

North. At this moment, James, that "budge doctor of the Stoic Fur" fears that the world thinks you are a ten-gallon-man, that you have a sma'-still in your bedroom, and that you have bribed the gauger by making him a parlour-boarder.

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw! haw!

North. Everything the Cockney reads he takes for gospel.

Shepherd. Except, aiblins, the Bible.

Tickler. Good, James—good.

North. That the rhinoceros drinks a river every morning before breakfast——

Tickler. And the war-horse literally devours the ground

[1] The passage is as follows:—"When the Ettrick Shepherd was first heard of, he had indeed but just learned to write by copying the letters of a printed ballad, as he lay watching his flock on the mountains; but thirty years or more have passed since then, and his acquirements are now such, that the Royal Society of Literature, in patronising him, might be justly said to honour a laborious and successful student, as well as a masculine and fertile genius. We may take the liberty of adding, in this place, what may not perhaps be known to the excellent managers of that excellent institution, that a more worthy, modest, sober, and loyal man does not exist in his Majesty's dominions than this distinguished poet, whom some of his waggish friends have taken up the absurd fancy of exhibiting in print as a sort of *boozing buffoon;* and who is now, instead of revelling in the license of tavern suppers and party politics, bearing up, as he may, against severe and unmerited misfortunes, in as dreary a solitude as ever nursed the melancholy of a poetical temperament."—*Quarterly Review,* vol. xliv. p. 81.

between him and his enemies—swallowing at lunch five acres, four roods, and three perches.

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw! haw!

North. So, being a man of the strictest veracity, and of the highest authority in the moral world, the mandarin shakes his head at our Noctes, and gives not only the lie circumstantial, but the lie direct to a fact unfortunately established, I fear, in the conviction of the Pensive Public, that We Three have frequently demolished at a sitting the Tower of Babel.

Tickler. Were the worthy gentleman here now, why he would be under the table in a state of civilisation superior to anything seen since the last debauch of Sardanapalus.

North. 'Tis a sad dog—and, to my knowledge—with a wife and a dozen children—keeps a——

Shepherd. O fie, sir, nae personalities. We maun pity and forgie stupidity when it begins to maunder—even though it maunder malice.

Tickler. I presume he has made a pilgrimage to the grave of Sir Roger de Coverley.

North. Sleeping in the sunshine side by side with Will Wimble.

Tickler. He believes devoutly, no doubt, that the Spectator had a short nose——

North. And got boozy thrice a-week at Button's.

Tickler. The world is well stocked just now, James, with matter-of-fact men——

Shepherd. What? Ca' ye't a matter-o'-fact that a boozin buffoon ever Glenlivetised at the Noctes?

Tickler. It is a matter-of-fact lie, James—and that the Cockney knoweth right well; but he wished to do you a kindness, without in his dotage clearly comprehending how to set about it, and, with the best intentions in the world, has accordingly committed one of the usual calumnies of the Cockneys, manifestly priding himself all the while in the idea of having essentially served the Ettrick Shepherd, and given him a shove up the hill of preferment.

North. Somewhat of the latest—a feeble fumble of falsehood at the eleventh hour.

Shepherd. I'm sure I ought to be muckle obleeged to the weak, but weel-meanin man for his vindication o' my character. But I howp the wark o' supererogation mayna be ill for his constitution; and it's the first time I ever heard o'

onybody's pityin Atlas for supportin on his back and shouthers the starry heavens.

North. He then tells the Pensive Public, that at our Noctes the entire talk is of "Party Politics."

Shepherd. Na! that's an even-doun lee—and gin a writer wull indulge in trash, he should spice't wi' at least ae grain o' truth, or he'll be in danger, in a fit o' coughing, to choke on his ain slaver.

Tickler. Don't be coarse, James.

Shepherd. Coorse? Wha's fine but fules? Muckle nonsense we do speak at the Noctes—but pairty politics we leave to the twa Houses o' Parliament—an' discuss, when we hae discussion, the universal and eternal interests o' mankind.

Tickler. The truth is, gents, that this jackass must have had his long ears pulled, and his tauty hide knouted by Maga, and Joannes' has with his well-known good-nature indulged him in a quarterly bray——

Shepherd. A jackass brayin at the moon! a comical eemage.

North. But still he must be cudgelled off the premises, and "taught never to come there no more,"—if it were only for the sake of the poor echoes.

Shepherd. Do you ken, sirs, that it's a curious fack in natur that the bray o' an ass has nae echo? Gin it had an echo, sic is the disposition o' the cretur, that it would keep brayin till it drapped doun dead, forgetfu' o' its thustles; whereas, by the present constitution o' the breed, nae lang-continued brayin can tak place excepp when there are a multitude o' asses by some strange chance colleckit thegither; and then, indeed, ilka ane imagines that a' the rest are but his echoes, and thus, in pride o' heart, the gang do astonish the heavens. But in the *Quarterly Review*, the ass aforesaid maun find himsel a solitary beast, and will sune loot doun his lang leather and lantern jaws in seelence amang the dockens.

Tickler. I only hope he won't cross the breed, James, else, instead of the ethereal coursers of the sun that run in that chariot, ere long we shall see a team of mules that, in their native obstinacy, will *reest* when they meet with any up-hill work, or bolt obliquely into the sea.

Shepherd. Nae fears.

Tickler. I am delighted to see that the *Quarterly*—like

[1] John G. Lockhart.

some other Periodicals—has the spunk to imitate Maga in her Double Numbers. The last was, in general, admirable, and is to be followed immediately—next time I hope the two will appear simultaneously—by another, which I doubt not will be worthy of its predecessor, now justly making a distinguished figure in the world.

North. The *Quarterly Review* is a great national work, and may it live for ever. Notwithstanding his not unfrequent oversights, not a man alive could edit it in such a style as Mr Lockhart.

Shepherd. No ane. But wha's he this?

North. The wiseacre, James, has been pleased to inform the Royal Society of Literature, that, in spite of the Noctes, the Ettrick Shepherd is a sober man, and a loyal subject.

Shepherd. Hoo kens he that?

North. He also says, James, that Altrive is as melancholy a solitude as can be imagined——

Shepherd. What? and wee Jamie there!

North. And speaks of you as a fit object, not only of patronage, but of pity.

Shepherd. Pity I spurn—patronage I never asked; but for the patronage of enlightened men, if it ever be bestowed upon me, I hope that I shall hae deserved it.

North. James, let us for a moment be serious on this subject. All Britain—and many other lands besides—have delighted in the Noctes Ambrosianæ, of which you are the Life and the Soul. Ours has been ever "weel-timed daffin;" our mirth

> "On the wan cheek of sorrow has waken'd a smile,
> And illumined the eye that was dim with a tear!"

Shepherd. Aften, sir—I ken aften——

North. In our higher moods, we have opened our hearts to one another, nor concealed one secret there that ought to be divulged in the sacred intercourse of friendship between man and man.

Shepherd. Aften, sir, aften.

North. We have unburdened to one another our hearts of cares and sorrows, which we share in common with all our brethren of mankind;

> "All our secret hoards of unsumm'd griefs"

have—as far as might and ought to be—been laid out in the light of confident affection, and been aired by the gracious gales of heaven.

Shepherd. Now and then sic has indeed been the case.

North. We have looked over the fields of human life, and we have made our reflections on the ongoings there, sometimes, perhaps, in no unlearned spirit, not seldom in a spirit which I do not fear to call religious, and almost always in a spirit of humanity—blaming none but the worthless—honouring the good—and celebrating the great—whatever tongues they speak, whatever climes they inhabit.

Shepherd. We hae dune that, sir, to the best o' our abeelity—and our abeelity's no sma', unless the warld be a leear.

North. Seldom do we talk about politics at all here, James; but when we do, assuredly not about party politics, as I said a moment ago; but about such measures of the Ministry or Government as affect the well-being of the State. Occasionally we have taken a glance at the Continent, where revolutions are brewing, or have burst, and where the deafest ear may hear, like subterranean music, a hubbub foretelling war. Now and then, when excursively disposed, we

"Survey mankind from China to Peru;"

and more than once, embarking in our Ship of Heaven, with Imagination at the helm, we have doubled Cape Horn.

Shepherd. Circumnavigawtors!

North. Nor have we feared, James, at times

—— "to pierce
The caves obscure of old Philosophy."

Tickler. And to bring up in a bucket Truth from the bottom of her well.

North. In short, James, there is no subject which, at our Noctes, we have not touched; and none have we touched that we did not adorn; making

"Beauty still more beauteous."

Shepherd. And ugliness mair ugsome, till the stamack o' the universe scunnered at vice.

North. And of such Dialogues, diviner than those of Plato — yea, even than his Banquet — our friend presumes

to say that the staple is boozing buffoonery, and party politics!

Shepherd. He's wrang there.

North. Now, James, *what* were the politics of the *Quarterly Review*—I speak of a period previous to its present management—during, perhaps, the most perilous crisis in which this country had ever been placed! I ought rather to say *where* were its politics? Why, according to a tardy confession in the last Number, they were kept sealed up by Mr Canning, with his official impress, in the conscience of Mr Gifford.[1]

Shepherd. Eh? What? Hoo?

North. While we, James,—while Maga, James,—while the Noctes, James, were defending the principles of the British constitution, bearding its enemies, and administering to them the knout, the *Quarterly Review* was mute and mum as a mouse——

Tickler. Afraid to lose the countenance and occasional assistance of Mr Canning!

North. There indeed, James, was a beautiful exhibition of party politics—a dignified exhibition of personal independence——

Tickler. Of Tory-truckling enough to make the Collector of the *Jacobite Relics* a Whig.

North. The old gentleman informs the Royal Society of Literature, that they must not suffer themselves to be deluded by the Noctes into a belief that the Ettrick Shepherd is not a "loyal subject!" Do traitors compose new King's anthems? Set loyal songs to their own music? Rout and root out radicals? Baste the Blue-and-Yellow till it is black in the back? And, while the lips of hirelings are locked, chant hymns

"To the pilot that weathered the storm?"

Shepherd. Ma poem on Pitt 's prime.

Tickler. Maga has been the mouthpiece of constitutional monarchy——

Shepherd. Ever sin' the Chaldee.

North. Methinks that, with respect to politics, either party

[1] Mr Gifford was the editor of the *Quarterly Review* from its commencement in 1809 until 1824. In the short interval between his retirement and Mr Lockhart's appointment to the editorship, it was superintended by Mr H. N. Coleridge.

or national, the *Quarterly Review*, of bygone days at least, ought not thus to take such high ground above Maga, seeing that it has, by its own voluntary acknowledgment, hitherto occupied the lowest ever assigned to servility; and that the mutes of Mr Canning's mute should remain mute still about Maga, who never suffered Prime Minister or Foreign Secretary to shut her mouth, although Christopher North loved and admired George Canning as well as ever William Gifford did, they being, I do not fear to say it, far more congenial spirits; though, to be sure, there was no debtor and creditor account between them, except such as may be kept open between independent men, and closed by either party at pleasure.

Tickler. He was a fine—a noble spirit.

North. He was. But though his smiles charmed, his frowns quailed not Maga; and can it be questioned by the gentlemen of England, that the *Quarterly* should have deserted Canning rather than the country, at a time that seemed to be alike the crisis of either, and that gratitude to a friend, had he been a bosom-brother, should have yielded to love of one's fatherland? [1]

Shepherd. I'm in the dark, like Moses when the candle went out, about this, my boy. What are ye talkin about?

Tickler. Change the subject, Kit. Yet one word, if you please, on the *Quarterly's* benefactions to the Ettrick Shepherd. Has she all along shown the same fiery zeal in defence, support, and exculpation of our friend, now exhibited in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" by this Curious Antique?

North. James, nearly twenty years have elapsed since the publication of the *Queen's Wake*. The *Edinburgh Review* did justice to the genius that shines in that poem. But because you turned out to be a loyal Tory, instead of a disloyal Whig, never again did Mr Jeffrey do honour to the Shepherd's plaid. Nay, a poor creature attacked you personally in an article on your *Jacobite Relics*—and as a proof of your total want of taste, and your utter unfitness for the task, quoted as the best of all these old ballads, Donald M'Gillivray, not one of the worst of your own; his ignorance neutralising his malice, and his stupidity paying unconsciously the highest tribute to your genius.[2]

[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 370.

[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 265.

Shepherd. I had the blockhead on the hip there, sir, and in Maga I gied him his licks till his hips were like indigo.

North. You did. But during all these twenty years, when you were nobly struggling on, swimming against the stream, with bold heart and sinewy arms, giving buffet for buffet, and though sometimes losing way, yet recovering it by your own energies, and like a water-dragon cresting the spate, pray what assistance or encouragement gave the *Quarterly* to the bard, seemingly about, at times, to be carried down into the waters of oblivion? None.

Shepherd. Nane, indeed, or a sma' share waur than nane.

North. A sneering article on your *Poetic Mirror*, "damning with faint praise," was all her generosity could afford, all her justice could grant; and I hope you were thankful for the largesse.

Shepherd. I remember naething about it.

North. Seeing that you were known to be such a loyal subject, why was not the Ettrick Shepherd cheered in the Forest by the voice of praise, which would have at least soothed, if it could not relieve his virtuous poverty?

Shepherd. I surely deserved better at their hauns, for I'm willing to pitch the *Queen's Wake* again' ony Oxford poem that ever was wrote by ony Oxford Professor.

Tickler. No sneers at Milman—the most imaginative of all our poets of the classical school.

Shepherd. Is't a sneer at the *Fa' o' Jerusalem*, to offer to compare wi't, in pint o' genie—for I gie up the polish o' the feenishin o' the execution—wi' the *Queen's Wake?* Ma certes!

North. Each successive poem of that beautiful writer was highly—not too highly—praised in the *Quarterly Review*, to which he has been one of the most powerful contributors. On every account he deserved such eulogies. But why were you forgotten, James? First, because a Scotchman—and, secondly, because you were a shepherd.

Shepherd. And a shepherd's as gude ony day as a shoemaker—though Bloomfield was ane;—as for Gifford, I jalouse he was never nair nor a cobbler.

North. James, in this age, genius often lives the life, and dies the death of a slave. True devotion is lost in idol worship, a shepherd has no chance against a lord—his

sweet solitary pipe is drowned in the clangour of many trumpets.

Shepherd. I'm easy. Mine'll aye continue to be heard at intervals, like the sang o' the linty amang the broom in the season o' spring,—and them that loves to listen to Allan Ramsay, and Robbie Burns, and Allan Kinninghame, 'ill never forget a'thegither the Ettrick Shepherd. That thocht's aneuch for me—and I'm content wi' my fame, sic as it is, amang my native braes.

North. Right. Your name will never die.

Shepherd. Thank you, sir,—here's your health. You've been suffering under a sair hoast, I hear; but thae lozenges maun be Crichton's best, for though last week as hoarse as a craw, your vice is noo musical as that o' the nichtingale.

North. Now, James, look on this picture, and then on this, —from the *Quarterly* turn to Maga, and exclaim with Wordsworth's lover—

"Oh!
The difference to me!"

From the Chaldee to the Winter Rhapsody,[1] she never has been weary of singing your praise. She scorned to flatter—to butter you, James, though well she knew that never yet was flattery lost on poet's ear, nor butter lost on poet's cheek; but she gained and kept for you a clear field and no favour, on which you had elbow-room, James, to contend with all your rivals, and on which you had perpetual opportunities of appearing, with your best foot foremost, before the Pensive Public. Her pages were always open to your genius; and how often, by your genius, have they been illuminated! What if, since the 1817, when Maga first effulged on a benighted world, she had treated you as the *Quarterly* did, who now, somewhat late in life, has assured the Royal Society of Literature, that in spite of these wicked Noctes Ambrosianæ which have "frighted the isle from her propriety," the Ettrick Shepherd is a loyal subject? Why, let me not hesitate to say, James, that bright as your genius is, the shades of obscurity or of oblivion would long ere now have fallen over it in the Forest.

[1] Republished, from *Blackwood's Magazine*, in the *Recreations of Christopher North*, under the title of "Soliloquy on the Seasons."

Shepherd. May be. Burns himsel was little thocht o' in Embro' when he was leevin in Dumfries.

North. After your death, my dear James, your fame would have revived, for genius is imperishable; but Maga, and Christopher North, and Yourself, my incomparable Shepherd, by our united power, strong in steadiest friendship, kept the flame of your genius, and the fame of your name, alive during your life, which is better far than that it should have been left, after flickering or going out while its possessor was above ground, to be rekindled on your grave.

Shepherd. Posthumous fame's a wersh thocht without a preein[1] o' the present; for oh, sir! what a difference atween the quick and the dead!

Tickler. Did this Censor——

Shepherd. Hear till Mr Tickler—dinna interrupt Mr Tickler.—Mr Tickler, what was ye ettlin to say when Mr North took the word out o' your mouth?

Tickler. Did the old gentleman who drawls about the boozing buffoonery of the Noctes, every hear of a celebrated lawyer, one Pleydell, who, in his leisure hours, was strenuously addicted to High Jinks?[2]

Shepherd. I daursay never—he'll prove to be the individual that never heard o' Sir Walter Scott. My freen, Mr Cadell, ance telt me o' either himsel or an acquaintance forgatherin, on the tap o' a cotch, wi' a weel-informed man, in black claes, wha had never heard o' Sir Walter, o' Abbotsford, or the Scotch Novels. *He* maun be the contributor.

North. How he came not only to hear of you, James, but to be among the number, if we believe him, of your familiars, is as puzzling as his ignorance of the existence of the greatest man alive; yet, in his simplicity, he supposes the Royal Society of Literature to stand in need of some recondite information from his pen, about the life and character, and genius of a Bard, whose name—the Ettrick Shepherd—has long been a household word all over Britain.

Tickler. In what unknown cave do these seers abide, supposed to be thus unacquainted with all the ongoings of the upper world?

North. They live in London——

Shepherd. And me in the Forest. Fowre hunder miles,

[1] *Preein*—tasting.

[2] See *Guy Mannering*.

aften o' mist and snaw, intrudes between them and me—and I'm muckle obleeged, after a', to the honest gentleman, for remindin them o' my existence, and for clearin my character, aboon a' things, frae the stain o' disloyalty contracted frae the traitors wha hae sae lang been plottin against Church and King at the Noctes Ambrosianæ. I thank him also for telling their worships that I'm a sober man—though I canna quite agree wi' him in conceivin't to be ony proof to the contrar, that some sax times a-year I indulge in a gaudeamus in the Snuggery. Thank him, too, for assuring the Society, that our meetings here are no purely imaginary, as some coofs jalouse —and that this Glenlivet—oh! but it outdoes itsel the nicht —is no mere pented air, sic as ane endeavours unavailingly to drink in his dreams. He has removed the Noctes frae the shadowy and unsubstantial realms o' Faery, intil the solid world o' reality, established for perpetuity "their local habitation and their name" in the minds of all the people of Britain and elsewhere—yea, embalmed their remembrance in the more than Egyptian wisdom o' his ain genius——

Tickler. A pair of mummies, that, when countless generations have passed away, and left no memorial of their being, will be preserved in the museums of the curious and scientific, and poetry penned upon them by the wonder of bards flourishing during the Millennium.

North. I should be sorry, my dear James, to let the world believe, with the lacrymose eulogist of your sobriety and loyalty—virtues as native to your orb as light and heat to that of the sun,—a luminary, by the by, which he ought forthwith to vindicate from the generally credited calumny, that he seldom goes to bed, or rises from it, without drinking an unconscionable draught of the sea,—I should be sorry, I say, James, to let the world believe that you are a melancholy man, living in a melancholy place, the victim of unmerited misfortunes, and the misunderstood and misrepresented Interlocutor in these our Dialogues, at once the disgrace and the delight of the age—countenanced though they be by Kings on their thrones, Bishops and Judges by their benches, Peers and Peasants in hall and hut, Ladies in silk, and Lassies in grogram——

Tickler. By "Laughter holding both his sides."

North. And by Il Penseroso, "under the shade of melan-

choly boughs," feeling himself gradually growing into L'Allegro——

Tickler. Or coming out of the Cave of Trophonius, with "nods and becks and wreathed smiles," so potent the magic of Maga, folded in a Double Number across his fortified heart.

North. Most musical thou art, O Shepherd, but not most melancholy; nor hast thou cause, any more than the nightingale, to be other than a merry Bird of Song. True, that with all thy skill and science—witness "Hogg on Sheep"—thy pastoral farm has not been more prosperous than those of thy compeers; but during all thy struggles, thou didst preserve an unspotted name, nor was there wanting one stanch friend to stand by thee in thy difficulties, whether a new edition of the *Wake* was deemed advisable, or the publication of *Queen Hynde*, or a collection of thy matchless Songs, many of them first chanted in this Snuggery, James—and how vocal its roof!—or if thy racy articles, beloved by Maga, were sent in from the Forest to brave the Balaam-Box—that tomb of so many Capulets—one stanch friend, James, whom none but the base abuse——

Shepherd. William Blackwood. The Bailie[1] has aye been a gude freen to me—but let me say, sir, that I aye gied as gude's I got—and that we staun on the same level o' mutual obligation.

North. He is your debtor, James—and is proud to be so——

Shepherd. Na—he's no. But in a' his dealings wi' me, he's been the gentleman, which is something mair nor I can say o' some that ance held their head sae high, and far mair than I can say o' ithers, who, while they trumpet their payment, are as penurious in their poverty as the blusterin wund that, amidst a glint o' seeming sunshine, brings naething but a cauld blash o' sleet.

North. Your works, my dear James, in prose and verse, most of them full of the inspiration of true genius, and none of them without its breath, have been, with few months'

[1] Mr Blackwood was one of the bailies of Edinburgh at this time. To his enterprise the world is indebted for the projection of the Magazine which has made his name so universally known; and, assisted as he was in its management by able advisers, and in particular by Professor Wilson, to his own judgment he always ultimately trusted, and on him really rested the editorial labour and responsibility. He died in 1834.

intermission, appearing before the world, often in Maga, for upwards of twenty years—and during all that time, your character has been known to thousands of your admiring and affectionate countrymen. Should any Society, whose noble object it is to reward genius and virtue by solid pudding, and not by empty praise, befriend you in the calm and bright afternoon of your life—for 'tis not yet the gloaming, the evening is still far off, and long, long may it be ere cometh to thee the night in which no man can work—there will be a blessing in their bounty—not on you only, but on themselves.

Shepherd. Whisht, sir, whisht. Poor as I am, I'm independent—at least I'm no idle; and conscious o' my integrity, I'm as happy as a bird,—though often, you ken sir, the happiest bird wull sit mute and pensive on the bough, aside its nest, when its loving mate is cowerin ower their young anes, as if it was thinkin within itsel what wad become o' them, if it fell aneath the fowler, and the grun' were to be a' covered wi' spring snaw!

North. God bless you, my dear James, such melancholy moments but serve to brighten sunshine and gladden song.

Shepherd. Oh! but I was cheerfu' at the curlin!

Tickler. The beef and greens.

North. We have put, I think, this matter in the proper light—removed from it all misapprehension—and courteously and kindly reminded the *Quarterly*, that should the genius and virtues of the author of the *Queen's Wake* and the Ettrick Shepherd receive their due and dignified reward from any enlightened patronage, whether of an individual or a society, no praise can, in that case, by possibility, be deserved by that rich but rather stingy periodical; because that, whatever merit may belong to any one besides the poet himself and those who may prove his benefactors, it most assuredly does belong to William Blackwood, Christopher North, and Maga—to whom——

Shepherd. I beg leave to add, wi' a heart fu' o' everlastin gratitude, John Gibson Lockhart, and Sir Walter Scott.

North. On whom, now and ever, be all blessings poured from heaven—and may the light of their hearths burn bright as that of their fame!

Shepherd. Amen,—Hurraw! hurraw! hurraw! Noo, I'll sing you a bit sang, out o' the collecksbun—

SONG.[1]

O weel befa' the maiden gay,
In cottage, bught,[2] or penn;
An' weel befa' the bonny May
That wons in yonder glen,
Wha lo'es the modest truth sae weel—
Wha's aye sae kind, an' aye sae leal,
An' pure as blooming asphodel
Amang sae mony men.
O, weel befa' the bonny thing
That wons in yonder glen.

'Tis sweet to hear the music float
Alang the gloaming lea;
'Tis sweet to hear the blackbird's note
Come pealing frae the tree;
To see the lambkin's lightsome race—
The speckled kid in wanton chase—
The young deer cower in lonely place,
Deep in his flowery den;
But sweeter far the bonny face
That smiles in yonder glen.

O, had it no been for the blush
Of maiden's virgin flame,
Dear beauty never had been known,
An' never had a name.
But aye sin' that dear thing of blame
Was modell'd by an angel's frame,
The power of beauty reigns supreme
O'er a' the sons of men;
But deadliest far the sacred flame
Burns in a lonely glen.

There's beauty in the violet's vest—
There's hinny in the haw—
There's dew within the rose's breast,
The sweetest o' them a'.
The sun will rise and set again,
And lace wi' burning gowd the main—
The rainbow bend outower the plain,
Sae lovely to the ken;
But lovelier far the bonny thing
That wons in yonder glen.

[1] Sung here for the second time, with one or two slight variations. See vol. i. p. 203.

[2] *Bught*—sheepfold.

Tickler. Clearly and crousely crawed, my cock.

North. Sweetly and silverly sung, my nightingale.

Shepherd. It's a gran' thing, sirs, to be the cock o' the company, occasionally; at ither times, pensie as a pullet.

Tickler. Anything but a hen.

Shepherd. At leeterary soopers, I like to see a blue-stocking playin the how-towdy.

North. How?

Shepherd. Chucklin intil hersel, when a spruce young cockie is lettin his wing drap close aside hers, and half-receivin half-declinin his advances, like ony ither Christian lassie wha mayna hae the gift o' writin verses ayont a Valentine. Far better sic undertoned and underhaund natural dealins, maist innocent a', than cacklin about Coleridge, or blouterin about Byron, or cheepin, as if she had the pip, o' Barry Cornwall.

North. Some maidens I know, James, bright as the muses, whose souls, as well as frames, are made of the finest clay, who before the eyes of the uninitiated pass for commonplace characters, because, unpresumptuous in their genius, and retiring in their sensibility, oft "the house affairs do call them thence;" because, to their lips none so familiar as household words; and because to their hearts dearer are the tender humanities of life, than bright to their imaginations the poetic visions, that yet "swarm on every bough," when they walk in their beautiful happiness by Windermere or Loch Lomond.

Tickler. I, too, like occasionally to play the first fiddle.

Shepherd. An' you're entitled to do sae; for you've a fine finger, and a bauld bow-haun.

North. I love best of all to sit sympathetically mute among my friends, and by a benign countenance to encourage the artless fluency of young lips, overflowing with the music of untamed delight in life, "a stranger yet to pain."

Shepherd. A benign countenance!

North. Few words have been more perverted from their true meaning, by being narrowed, than the words one so frequently hears, nowadays, from not unvulgar lips — "Good Society"—"The Best Society."

Tickler. "The highest circles."

North. In my opinion, James, a man may commit a worse mistake, in aspiring to association with persons above his own rank, than in descending somewhat, perhaps, below it, in the intercourse of private and domestic life.

Shepherd. Many sumphs o' baith sexes do. There may be pride in ilka case; but the pride o' the first maun aften gnaw its thoom. The pride o' the second aftener wats its thoom to join't to that o' a brither, though born in laigh degree, probably as gude or a better man than himsel; and whan that's fund out, pride dees, and in its place there grows up a richtfu' affection.

North. All men of sense know their natural position in society—whether it has been allotted to them by birth, by wealth, by profession, by virtue, by talent, by learning, or by genius.

Shepherd. Happy he—and fortunate—to whom have been given all these gifts!

North. Yet some, my dear James, to whom they all have been given, have abused them—ay, even genius and virtue—and their friends have been speechless of them ever after their funerals.

Tickler. Some use the terms "good society," as if they thought all society but that which they have in their eye, bad; and they superciliously shun all other, as not only *infra dig*, but in itself absolutely low, and such as they could not even casually enter without loss of honour—without degradation.

North. Yet, when one asks himself, Tim, "who are *they?*" it is not, at least, of their pedigree they have to be proud, for, perhaps,

"Their ignoble blood
Has crept through scoundrels ever since the Flood."

But by means of some showy accomplishment, or some acquired elegance, perhaps of demeanour, or some *suave* subservience that sits so naturally upon them that they—all unlike though it be—mistake it for the easy manner of the higher class to which they have been permitted to become an appendage—they believe, at last, that they belong to the privileged orders, and look down on people who would not have shaken hands with their father, had he given them half the gold his itching palm had purloined.

Tickler. Such aspirants generally sink as they had soared; and after their dangling days are done, you may chance to meet them shabby-genteel, in streets not only unfashionable, but unfrequented, somewhat old-looking, and ready to return your unexpected nod with an obsequious bow.

Shepherd. Puir chiels!

North. We all fall—if we be wise—of our own accord—and according to the operation of laws plain and unperplexing—into our proper place in the intercommunion of life. Thence we can look pleasantly, and cheerfully, and socially, around, above, and below us—unimpatient of peer, and unashamed of peasant—but most at home at firesides most like our own—a modest mansion—half-way, perchance, between hall and hut—that Golden Mean which all sages have prayed for, and which Religion herself has called blest!

Shepherd. A' doors alike are open to you, sir, and every heart loups wi' welcomin at the clank o' your crutch on the marble—the stane—the sclate—the wooden, or the earthen stair.

North. I am no flatterer of the great, James; but——

Shepherd. The Freen o' the sma'.

North. Small? Who is—or need sing small, who bears within his bosom an honest heart?

Shepherd. But why look sae fearsome in uttering sic a sentiment?

North. Because I thought of "the proud man's contumely," the oppressor's——

Shepherd. There's less oppression in this land than in ony ither that ever basked in sunshine, or was swept by storm; sae lay by the crutch, sir, and let that face subside, for

> "Blackness comes across it like a squall,
> Darkening the sea;"

ay, ay—thank ye, sir, thank ye, sir, 'tis again like the sky in the mornin licht.

Tickler. Not quite so blue, I hope.

Shepherd. Nae sarcasm, Tickler; better blue nor yellow. May I ask hae ye gotten the jaundice?

Tickler. Merely the reflection of that bright yellow vest of yours, James, which, I fear, won't stand the washing.

Shepherd. It'll scoor.

North. Yet, delightful indeed, James, as you know, are the manners of high birth. There is a mighty power in manners, James, connected with the imagination.

Shepherd. What's your wull?

North. Why, in societies highly cultivated, some of the

lightest and most exquisite motions of imagination exercise acknowledged authority over the framework of life.

Shepherd. Eh, sir?

North. As it might have been said at Paris, for example, James, in its height of civilisation, that among its highest circles, even the delicate play of Fancy, in lightest conversation, cultivated as it was as an accomplishment, and worn as the titular ornament of those among whom life was polished to its most sparkling lustre, even that grace of courtly wit, and playing fancy, had force in binding together the minds of men, and in maintaining at the summit of life, the peace and union of society. How strongly the quick clear sense of the slight shades of manners marked out to them those who belonged, and those who did not belong, to their order! In that delicate perception of manners, they held a criterion of rank by which they bound together as strongly their own society, as they separated it from all others. And thus the punctilios of manners, which appear so insignificant to ordinary observers, are, as they more finely discriminate the relations of men, of absolute power in the essential regulation and subordination of ranks.

Shepherd. Fine philosophy, I daursay, but rather ower fine for the fingers o' my apprehension, clumsy at the uptak o' silk threeds, but strang when clasped roun' a rape or a cable.

North. Now, James, passing from France under the old *régime*, when it was acknowledged all over Europe that the French were the politest people in the world, and their nobility the exemplars, in manners, of all nobilities, allow me to say that in all countries, where there is a hereditary peerage, that theirs is a life under the finest influences; and that in the delicate faculties of the mind, in its subtlest workings, in its gentlest pleasures, in even its morbid sensibilities, we are to look for the principles which govern with power their social condition. Why, the literature of this country is a bulwark of its political peace; not by the wisdom of knowledge thus imparted, but by the character it has impressed on the life of great classes of its inhabitants, drawing the pleasures of their ordinary life into the sphere of intellect.

Shepherd. But arena you rinnin awa frae the subjeck?

North. No, James—if you will allow me to proceed.

Shepherd. Ou ay, I alloo you—proceed.

North. By a control, then, of whatever kind, exercised upon the most finely sensitive faculties of the mind, the higher classes of civilised nations are bound together in the union of society. But the cultivation of this sensibility is a work that is continually going on among themselves, and is carried to greater perfection, as they are less disturbed by intermixture of those who are strangers to their own refinement. It goes on from one age to another; it is transmitted in families; it is an exclusive and hereditary privilege and distinction of the privileged orders of the community.

Shepherd. I see your drift now.

North. Now, this cultivated sensibility—of whatever importance, of which I now say nothing—which characterises, governs, and guards the highest classes of a long-civilised society, which war broke up and confounded in France by a political revolution, has been disturbed in our country by the changes which the excess of commercial prosperity has above all things brought on in the social relations of the people.

Shepherd. Mr Tickler, what for do you no join in?

Tickler. Thank heaven for that cough. Observe, James, how commerce, which is continually raising up multitudes of men high above the condition of their birth, has thrown up such numbers into a high condition of political importance, so that they have begun to fill what were once the exclusively privileged orders with sometimes—rude enough and raw recruits. The consequence is, and will farther be, that the distinction of ancient birth, which even fifty years ago was still kept very pure, is very fast blotting out from the nation.

Shepherd. Weel continued and carried on, Mr Tickler, in the same spirit wi' North's original and originating remarks. But nae great matter if the distinctions should be mingled thegither, though no just blotted out—I couldna thole that—we maun hae "our Lords and Dukes and michty Earls."

North. I do not mean to justify, James, the severity with which this distinction is in some countries maintained; but I have no idea that such a distinction, of such ancient importance, can be rapidly done away with impunity.

Tickler. Assuredly, sir, it cannot. The sensibilities and principles, whatever they are, which are become hereditary

with birth, are abolished with the distinction. However low their own worth may be—but they are not low—they are of vast political importance by the distinctive character they give, by the ostensible and fastidious separation with which they hedge in the highest political order in the state——

North. And seldom indeed, Mr Tickler, are they without their own high worth. In none of the great states of modern Europe have they been so. In this country, the principles of opinion, and the characteristic feelings which were avowed, cherished, and upheld by the Aristocracy and Noblesse, were of great dignity and importance.

Shepherd. Only look at their picturs on the galleries o' auld castles! What beautifu' and brave faces! What loveliness and majesty! Though noo and then, to be sure, a dowdy or a droich.[1]

North. This character can no longer maintain itself, James, when any cause, as commerce, throws into the class of the gentry, numbers who were not born to their rank. For the character is maintained by exclusion; in part by education within their own houses, where it may be said to be of hereditary transmission; in part by the power of opinion acting from one to another throughout their order. With the new members, it is evident, that as far as they compose the class, one cause cannot be in force; but more than this, they defeat by their admission the force of opinion among the others; for opinion holds its force solely by its sameness, and as soon as that is violated, its force is gone.

Shepherd. Is the change, then, sir, on the whole, think ye, for good or evil?

North. I cannot say, James. But this I will say, that now aristocracy of rank must be supported by aristocracy of talent and virtue, or it, in another century at latest, will fall.

Shepherd. And is't no?

North. It is. And therefore, for that, as for a hundred other reasons, I abhor the radicals—and go forth fearlessly to battle against them with——

Shepherd. The crutch.

North. The changes which the commercial system is working, may ultimately be for good; at any rate, they will proceed while that system endures. But the designs of low-

[1] *Droich*—dwarf.

minded, low-hearted, base, and brutal Jacobins must be resisted, not by law—for it must not be stretched to reach them—but by literature; not by the gibbet—for that is barbarous, but by the—Press.

Shepherd. Noble sentiments, sir. Let the devils ply their hollow engines, but let the angels overwhelm them with solid hills. But as ye say, sir, let there be no a hole in a' the claes o' the nobility themsels—nae stain on their scutcheons—and then they'll endure to the end o' time.

North. I believe, indeed I know, that unfortunately among the higher ranks of society, there prevails a great ignorance of the character of the lower ranks—their enjoyments, their pursuits, their manners, their morals, and their minds. They think of them too often almost as an inferior race. From their birth many of them have been trained and taught to do so; and in the condescension of the most enlightened, there is a mixture of pride repulsive to its object, and not to be accepted without some sacrifice of independence.

Shepherd. I aye thocht ye had been freendly to the distinction of ranks.

North. So I am, James—to a harmonious blending of distinct ranks——

Shepherd. Frae the king till the beggar.

North. Just so—from the king to the beggar——

Shepherd. I wad rather be the King o' the Beggars, wi' a croon o' strae and coort-duds, than some ither kings I could mention——

Tickler. No politics, James.

North. What strength would be in that State where each order knew the peculiar and appropriate virtues of all the rest—knew, loved, respected, and honoured them; and what a spirit of preservation!

Tickler. The worst enemy of his country and of his kind, is he who seeks to set one order against the other, by false aspersions on their prevalent character—the poor against the rich, the rich against the poor,—so with the high the humble born——

Shepherd. And aboon a', the flocks again' their shepherds—the shepherds o' their sowls. I never was wrang yet, in settin doun the fallow for a knave wha jeeringly pronounced the word "parson."

North. 'Tis become a slang-word with many who pretend

to be the friends of the people, and anxious, above all things, to promote their education. What would mighty England be without her Church?

Tickler. Her mind had not been a "thing so majestical," but for her glorious army of martyrs and apostles—in long array, the succession of her philosophic divines.

Shepherd. Oh! dear me! what wad I no gie the noo for a *what!*[1]

(*Enter* Mr Ambrose *with a Board of Oysters—the Council of Five Hundred—and* Tappytoorie, *with Ale and Porter, bottled and draught.*)

Tickler. Clear decks.

North. The Circular!

[*The What is deposited, with all its Paraphernalia, on the Circular.*

Shepherd. Awmrose, ma man, I'm thrusty—yill.[2]

Tickler. Ditto—Ambrose.

North. Mr Ambrose—ditto.

Shepherd (*after a long draught*). *That is yill.*

Tickler (*after a longer*). Consummate!

North (*at last*). Superb!

Omnes. Giles, or Berwick?[3]

Ambrose. Neither, gentlemen. 'Tis a sample sent me, in free gift, by Messrs Maitland and Davison——

Tickler. Of St Anne's Brewery, Croftangry?

Ambrose. Yes, Southside.

Shepherd. Croftangry? Isna that a name in the *Chronicles o' the Canongate?* Our freen's brewery's quite classical.

North. Nothing in this world can beat Berwick.

Tickler. Nor bang Giles——

Shepherd. I could hae taen my Bible oath it was Berwick.

Tickler. And I could have sworn upon that old almanac, history, that it was Giles.

North. I had my suspicions. There is in Berwick a ripe, a racy, and a reamy richness, unknown to any other malt that ever felt the power of barm, whose influence, gradual as the genial growth of spring, laps the soul in Elysium, till the coruscations of fancy play far and wide over a Noctes, like the Aurora Borealis; while in Giles there is a pure spirit of unadulterated strength, that, as it raises the soul to the height

[1] *What*—whet. [2] *Yill*—ale. [3] Brewers.

of heroic emotion, breathing deliberate colour, so beneath its power has many a cit and soldier

"Bow'd his anointed head as low as death."

Maitland and Davison—again—has inspired my being with a *new* feeling, for which no language I am acquainted with can supply an adequate name. That feeling impels me to say these simple words on behalf of the Spirit of Ale in general — speaking through me its organ — *Ale loquitur* — "If not suffered by Fate to fix my abode in barrels of Berwick or Giles, where I have long reigned alternate years, in all my glory, scarcely should I feel myself privileged to blame my stars, were I ordered for a while to sojourn in one of Maitland —and Davison!"

Shepherd. What poo'r[1] it has gien the pallet ower the inmost flavour o' the eisters!

Tickler. Shrimps.

Shepherd. Nae such shrimps, sir; but they melt like snaw-flakes,—

"A moment white, then gone for ever!"

North. Already are they decimated.

Shepherd. Weel-nigh decimated, indeed — for out o' the Coonsel o' Five Hundred, there's no fowre-score noo on the brodd.

Tickler. "With speedy gleams the darkness swallowed."

North. From my labours I thus fall back in dignified repose.

Shepherd. I never was sae sune stawed wi' eisters in a' my life.

Tickler. What! Have you pulled up, already, James?

Shepherd. That's the *manners ane.*[2] She's a sair temptation, wi' that bonny plump bosom o' hers; but I'm ower muckle o' a gentleman to tak advantage o' her unprotected singleness, sae we'll let her be.

North. Affecting subject for an elegy—The last Oyster!

Shepherd. I canna thole to look at it. Tickler, pu' the bell.

(*Enter* AMBROSE *and* KING PEPIN *to remove the Board.*)

Shepherd (*in continuation*). Pippy—she's yours.

[KING PEPIN, *with a bunch of empty Pots in each hand—stoops his Mouth to the Board, and sucks the lonely Damsel into his vortex.*

[1] *Poo'r*—powor.

[2] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 108.

Tickler. Let us resume our philosophical conversation.

Shepherd. Wi' a' my heart. My stamach's no fu'er the noo o' eisters than my head is o' ideas. Opium! what's opium to yill? Opium dazes—yill dazzles—opium carries a man intil the cluds—yill raises him to the sky.

Tickler. We were speaking, sir, of education.

North. Education! what manner of man is he whom we wish to have produced? Who in civil and private life will be "the happy warrior?" Must he not be high-mindedly courageous—generous in his intercourse with all his fellow-creatures—full of deep and tender affections, which are the support and happiness of those nearest and dearest to him—capable of sympathy with all joy and all suffering—with an imagination, not only the source of enjoyment to himself, but aiding to make all the aspects of things, serious, solemn, religious, to his spirit,——

Shepherd. Nae grandeur o' national character, sir, you say weel, without imagination. But, nooadays, a' her records are accoonted auld wives' tales, and the speerit o' Poetry is driven out o' edication sought to be imposed on the people, as if it were the plague. The verra claes o' a callant noo that has been found porin ower an auld ballad, maun be fumigated afore he is suffered to re-enter the school, — he maun perform quaranteen, sir, like a ship frae Constantinople or Smyrna, afore the passengers are alloo'd to land on our untainted shores. Is this an impreuvment, think ye, sirs, on the wusdom o' our forefathers? If this plan be persisted in, after twa-three generations, what will be the Spirit o' the Age? A barren spirit, and a' aneath it bare as broon bent in summer-drought, without ony drappin o' the sweet heaven-dews. Milton weel says, that in the sowl are many lesser faculties—Reason the chief—but what sort o' a chief will Reason be without his tail? Without his clan, noo a' sickly or extinck, ance poo'rfu' alike in peace and in war, to preserve or destroy, to build up and to pu' doun, beautifyin wi' perpetual renovation and decay the haill face o' the earth. O sirs! in anither century or less, 'twill be a maist monstrous warld, fit only for your Utilitawrians — and in less nor a second century, no fit even for them.

North. Intellectual all-in-alls, who will perish of hunger and thirst, destitute of the bread of life, and of its living waters.

Shepherd. I really believe, sirs, that were I lang to habi-

tuate mysel to this Glasgow rum, it would drive out the Glenlivet—except for caulkers. Only pree this het tummler o' toddy.

North (*sipping*). A Christmas box, James, from my valued friend, the Modern Pythagorean.[1] Quite a nosegay.

Shepherd. Ma smell's gane—and sae maun yours, wi' a' that snuffin, man; Prince's Mixtur, Prince's Mixtur, unce[2] efter unce, I wunner ye dinna snivel; but what for do ye aye keep thoom-thoomin at it in the shell—it's an ugly custom. What's this I was gaun to say? Hae ye read the Modern Pythagorean's wark on Sleep?

North. Several times entirely—and often by snatches. It is admirable.

Tickler. Come, I must keep you, Kit, to the subject in hand. That treatise deserves a separate article from your own pen.

North. And—sooner or later—it shall have it. Keep, then, to the subject in hand. What was it?

Tickler. A thousand powers, each bringing its own blessing, spring up by feeling, and in feeling have their own justification—which such an education never can give, but which it will deaden or destroy.

Shepherd. Eh?

Tickler. They are justified, James, by the idea which they themselves bring of themselves, in the mind which produces and harbours them; they bear witness for themselves; the man has felt them good—*sua bona novit*—and he clings to them unto the death. Who taught you patriotism?

Shepherd. Mysel.

Tickler. Not the Schoolmaster, who is now abroad[3]—at Botany Bay, perhaps, for forgery—but the Schoolmaster at home—your own heart, James—teaching itself the task it conned on the side of the sunny brae, or the ingle of your father's hut——

Shepherd. What ken you about my edication, sir? Yet the lang-legged chiel's no far wrang, efter a'.

Tickler. What kind of a nation, my dear Shepherd, does your heart rejoice in?

[1] Dr Macnish. See *ante*, p. 108.

[2] *Unce*—ounce.

[3] "The Schoolmaster is abroad" was a popular phrase at this time, intended to express the general diffusion of education, and the desire felt for it.

Shepherd. In the British—especially the Scotch.

Tickler. Are they better now, in any one sense whatever, than of old?

Shepherd. In a few things, better—in a hantle, waur.

Tickler. What do we want in a nation? Not a quantity of reasonable—contented—steady—sober—industrious inhabitants—mere Chineses——

Shepherd. Chineses?

Tickler. And nothing more—but you want men, who, if they are invaded, will spring up as one man—loving their ancestors, who cannot do anything for them——

Shepherd. That's truth—but wha hae dune for them incalculable and inappreciable things——

Tickler. And doing everything for their posterity, who have done and can do nothing for them——

Shepherd. True again.

Tickler. Men among whom crime is restrained, not by a vigilant police, but by an awful sense of right and wrong.

Shepherd. Existing naewhere but in minds deeply imbued wi' religion.

Tickler. Who love their soil, though unable to analyse it——

Shepherd. Gude!

Tickler. To whom poverty and its scanty hard-wrung pittances are the gift of God—who are sustained and animated in this life by the operation on their minds of their belief in another—a people in whose vigorous spirit joy is strong under all sorts of external pressure and difficulty——

Shepherd. That's no easy—neither is't impossible.

Tickler. I speak, James, of a country naturally poor—such as Scotland——

Shepherd. Scotland's no puir—she's rich, if no in the sile o' the yerth, in the sile o' the sowl——

Tickler. Were I to speak of England——

Shepherd. Shut his mouth, Mr North, on England, for he's England-mad——

Tickler. Well, then, James, I sink England, and say, that Honesty depends also upon Feeling, as a principle of action opposed to mere intellect—and that this is not known to many of our popular, and preaching, and itinerant Educationists. True, that "Honesty is the best Policy;" but Policy without

Honesty does not find that out. Honesty, both pecuniary and immaterial,—to wit, that will not wrong another in any way, by word, or deed, or thought, as a national trait, rests upon kindly generous feeling. Courage, frank and fearless, and kindheartedness, by the very terms, rest on the same foundation.

Shepherd. And what then?

North. What then, James? Why, that all this present fume and fuss about intellectual education will never produce the desired result, but, in all probability, impede the growth of true national virtue.[1]

Shepherd. You've aften heard me say that, sir.

North. So much the likelier is it to be true, James. Intellect walks in *certain* evidences of things—treating objects of positive knowledge—fixed relations—mathematical axioms—and truths drawn from itself—facts given by the senses.

Shepherd. A' verra true and verra important. Say awa', sir.

North. The character of Intellect is, that it is satisfied when it can refer what is now presented to it, to what it already knows; then, and then only, it seems to understand. But when Feeling springs up *upon* occasion, it springs up *for* the occasion, new, original, peculiar, not to be referred. The man does not say to himself, "I recollect that I felt so on such an occasion, acted upon it, and found it to answer;" but the feeling, even if he has so felt and done, comes up as if he had never felt it before—sees only the actual circumstances, the case, the person, the moment of opportunity, and imperatively wills the action.

Shepherd. That's the sort o' state o' the sowl I like—say awa, sir.

North. It is the unretrospection for authority, or precedent, as the unprospection of consequences, that makes the purity and essential character of feeling. We may reason and chastise our hearts, afterwards and before, in time of reflection and meditation; but not then when the moment of feeling has arisen,

[1] "I meet a man of inexhaustible dulness," says the author of *Friends in Council*, "and he talks to me for three hours about some great subject, this very one of education, for instance, till I sit entranced by stupidity—thinking the while 'and this is what we are to become by education—to be like you.' Then I see a man like D——, a judicious, reasonable, conversible being, knowing how to be silent too—a man to go through a campaign with; and I find he cannot read or write."

and we are to act by the strength which we know very well is to be had from it.

Shepherd. Profoond, yet clear like a pool i' the Yarrow.

North. Now, James, the mind that relies habitually on intellect, and does not rely on feeling, will bring the estimate of consequences to the time when it should only feel.

Shepherd. A fatal error in chronology indeed.

North. Such a mind, James, is disposed to distrust, nay, to discredit and resist, everything that offers itself *per se*, and is irreducible to the experienced past. It resists, therefore, miracles, and sneers at Christianity.

Shepherd. That's sad.

North. Then see how stone-blind it is to much in which you and I rejoice. The common understanding forms a low estimate of the great facts of Imagination and Sensibility. They are to it unintelligible—and it will not even believe that they ever have been felt, except by imbecile enthusiasts.

Shepherd. They lauch at the *Queen's Wake*——

North. Ay, at the *Paradise Lost.* The deeper, the bolder, the more peculiar the feeling, of course the more it puzzles, estranges, repels such an understanding. I do not well know myself, James, what feelings are the most deep, bold, and peculiar; but near to the most must be, I think, the purest and highest moral, the purest and highest religious feelings. For compare with them Imagination, and surely they are deeper far.

Shepherd. Far, far, far!

North. There is reason enough, then, James, in Nature, why Understanding, cultivated without a corresponding culture of feeling, should be adverse to it, for their causative conditions are opposite. Either cultivated alone becomes adverse to the other. Cultivated together—which is not the mode of popular education now,—they are friendly, mutually supporting, helping, guiding, and making joint strength.

Shepherd. Excellent, sir. But said ye never a' this to me afore.

North. Never at a Noctes, that I recollect. If feeling do exist, how must it "languish, grow dim, and die," under the distrust, or contempt, or ignorance of the understanding that ought to cherish it!

Shepherd. There's Tickler sleepin.

North. James—such minds undertake, we shall suppose, the express examination of great moral and religious tenets, with a view to ascertain their credibility; and because they have been trained to modes of reasoning, and to rules of evidence, with which these have little or nothing to do, and to which they are not amenable—why, what follows? Their utter rejection.

Shepherd. Deism—aiblins atheism.

North. A mind less trained might have continued to believe from habit, from authority, which is far better, surely, than not to believe at all, and the inevitable lot of many good and not unenlightened persons; but the pride of intellect in such minds disdains to submit to anything but conviction, which it is disqualified for obtaining.

Shepherd. I hae seldom heard you mair sage. (*Aside*)—Yet I'm sleepy.

North. Now, James, the same express scepticism or disbelief, which is thus engendered in the highly taught, is in the lower; and more surely, and worse. For high intellect may see so much as to suspect itself; but intellect, lowly taught (and how many such are there now?) never does. Moreover, my man, it is infinitely helpless; for it falls upon the difficulties obvious and gross to sight,—boggles at them,—and recoils into disbelief. Then, James, only think on the conceit of knowledge in half-taught people! Is it not often desperate and invincible?

Shepherd. I could knock them doun.

North. An imperfect, ill-founded moral and religious belief, is often still beneficial to the conduct and feelings; but a low, gross, self-conceited unbelief is more hardening and debasing than one that is more subtle.

Shepherd. Look at Tickler sleepin; as for me, I am only beginnin to yawn.

North. James, hear me——

Shepherd. I'm doin my best.

North. The ground-error, but which it needs courage to combat, is the proposition, that as Truth must be beneficial, so error and illusion must be injurious. Granted,—that perfect truth is the best thing in the world; but while truth and error are excessively mixed, it is impossible to say, *a priori*, that the removal of a particular illusion, in a given case, shall

be beneficial. That is, it is not true to say absolutely, that there is not a single illusion in one mind, of which the extirpation must not, in all possible circumstances, be better than the continuance. Perhaps the peace, perhaps the virtue, of the mind, is stayed upon it. We must not knowingly teach error, that is clear; but it is not equally clear that we are bound to destroy every error, much less to communicate to everybody every truth. There are truths without number that are no concern of theirs. Thus a belief in ghosts——

Shepherd (*starting from sleep*). Ghosts! Mercy on us! What was you sayin o' ghosts?

North (*frowning*). Bad manners—James—bad manners—to fall asleep during——

Shepherd. Sermon or lecture, either in Kirk or Snuggery—but you see I devoored rather a heavy denner the day, at Watson's; and then there's something sae sedative in the silver tones o' your vice, sir, that by degrees it lulls a listener into a dreamy dwawm, sic as fa's on a body stretched a' his length on a burn-brae, no far frae a waterfa', till his een see nae mair the bit flittin and doukin white-breisted water-pyats, and his sowl sinks awa, wi' the wimplin[1] murmur in its ears, into Fairy-Land.

North. I pardon you, my dear Shepherd, for your most poetical apology.

Shepherd. And I promise to do a' I can to keep mysel frae fa'in into the "pleasant land o' drowsyhead." Spoot away.

North. We may suppose, James, that a constant progress is making towards truth, and this is for happiness. But any one who looks at the world, and its history, may satisfy himself that, for some reason or another, this truth is not intended to come all at once.

Shepherd (*stretching himself*). Oh! dear!

North. Either in the human understanding, or the state of the human will, there is some ground wherefore this should not be. It is not possible, then, nor meant to push mankind forward at once into the possession of this inheritance. There are degrees and stages, a progress. Seeing this, a wise man is patient, temperate. He desires to do everything for his kind; but according to the possibilities and the plans of nature. Seeing this, he does not fall into the error, into which men are

[1] *Wimplin*—meandering.

misled by an uncalculating impatience, to bring on at once the reign of truth. Thinking that end possible which is impossible, too many nowadays think means will be effectual which are most ineffectual; and they imagine that small portions of truth communicated, which are in their power to communicate, are the reign of truth begun on earth. The truth which is in their power, is that which regards definite relations, as mathematics, and the science of matter. Their hasty imagination seizes on parcels of this truth, and upon plans for communicating them, and foresees, to judge from their manner of speaking, consequences of a magnitude and excellence, conceivable only if all truth had dominion of the human heart. Let us aid the progress, if possible, as ways open to us; but not imagine that the turn of *our* hand will transform the universe.

Shepherd (*brightening up*). I'm no the least sleepy noo, for that fa' ower the edge o' a precipice has waukened up my seven senses. But this is shamefu' behaviour in Tickler. (*Hollows in Tickler's ear*) Fire! Fire! Fire!

Tickler (*staring*). Who are you?

Shepherd. The Archbishop of Canterbury.

Tickler. What — Howley? How are you, my old buck? And how is Blomfield?

Shepherd. We are both well, sir, but a good deal troubled about these tithes. That auld deevil, Lord King——

Tickler (*recognising the Shepherd*). Why, that is language barely decorous in your grace — but ha! North, my old boy, what have you and James been prating about during my visit to the land of Nod? Come—a caulker—and I'm your man.

Shepherd. I have been instructing Mr North in some of my philosophical views on the subjeck o' national education.

Tickler. National education! James, there are two periods of human society—the first, of nature ruling in man, and the second of man ruling nature.

Shepherd. Bright as sunrise! sleep catches nae haud on him —but he flings it aff like a garment.

Tickler. During the first period, man is wisely governed by errors. During the second, he tends wisely to govern himself by truth. The transition from one period to the other is a time of crisis, and may be of convulsions. Much responsibility rests, North, on those who lead the change; for,

though the laws of nature will work out the change, individuals may hasten it.

North. I remember saying something like that to you, years ago, Tickler; and an acute writer, in some papers in the *Examiner*, entitled the "Spirit of the Age," expatiates well on this topic, though I know no reason why he should have said that I live, any more than himself, in the strife of party politics. The Sanctum in Buchanan Lodge — and the Snuggery here—are philosophical retirements not unvisited by the Muses, who are lovers of contemplation and peace.

Tickler. We should judge aright the period which is gone by, and that period which is coming on — so rightly may we act during the present. In judging the past, we are not to condemn errors simply because they were errors. They were — many of them — the necessary guidance of man. Neither ought we to judge the total effect of the error by the effect of the excess of the error.

Shepherd. I wuss you wad repeat that apothegm.

Tickler. For example, James, we are not to judge the total effect of monastic orders by the worst pictures of sloth and vice which monasteries have afforded — not the total effect of Aristotle's *Dialectics*, if erroneous, or erroneously used, by the most frivolous and vain of the scholastic subtleties — not the total effect of the Roman Catholic religion at a Spanish or English *auto-da-fé*.

Shepherd. You're a true liberal, Mr Tickler. Sae are you, Mr North; and sae am I; and sae are the Noctes. Nae snorin noo.

Tickler. To judge thus, gentlemen, is to introduce into our minds an asperity of feeling which will infallibly disturb our judgment, will prevent our understanding the world as it is, and our proceeding with the calmness and temper necessary for doing well what we have got to do. Our business is not to hunt error out of the world, but to invite and induce truth.

Shepherd. A mild and majestic sentiment, sir. I can scarcely believe my een and my lugs when they inform me that the speaker is Southside—Tickler the——

North. Hush, James. Hear the Sage.

Tickler. It is a work not of enmity but of love.

Shepherd. Beautifu'!

Tickler. We see the line of human progress, Kit; and the opposite character of the two extremities; but know not whereabouts we stand in it. We see errors gone and going; we see truths come and coming;—but we are not to conclude that every error which is left has outstaid its time, and is now no longer anything but pernicious—nor that every truth that will ever be wanted is now wanted—and, least of all, that any little morsel of truth which *we* happen to hold, is of such wondrous efficacy that a prodigious effort is to be made to impart it.

Shepherd. You've overheard Mr North in your sleep, Mr Tickler, sae congenial are your thoughts wi' his ain — twun bruthers.

Tickler. Eh, North?

North. Oh! for a full and perfect union in man of Will and Intellect! In the first period to which you alluded, Will is provided, Tickler; in it you see indeed all the energetic Wills; —the Homeric Greeks, the Spartans, the earlier Romans, the Arabs, the Germans, the Vykingr, the American Indians—you see it everywhere, from north to south; then all the youth of the world was on fire. But, in the second period, man has naturally to provide Will, for in it he comes to be deficient; and what there is, is comparatively cold. In the first period Will, and in the second Intellect, is over-preponderate.

Shepherd. In the third, let us howp that the twa will be sae nicely balanced, that a grain o' sense or a drap o' feelin will either way turn the beam.

North. James, my dear boy, you are well qualified, both by nature and education, to judge on this question.

Shepherd. What question, sir?

North. In early society mark how the Will is made strong by the passionate and hard-contending condition of ordinary physical life. Also *then*, James, the different ranks of society being by the simplicity of life more nearly united, common feelings pervade all. A deep, broad sympathy imbues sentiments and opinions. Superstitions, tenets, faiths of all sorts, hold unquestioned dominion. Men believe by sympathy; for what none has disputed, that is faith. What half dispute, perhaps none cordially believe.

Shepherd. I ken that, by experience o' what is noo gaun on amang the shepherds o' the Forest, wi' their debating clubs,

and what not—few noo believe even in the Brownie o' Bodsbeck.

North. Now, my dear friends, pardon the anxiety of an old man for the children growing up round his feet.

Shepherd. The rising generation, about to shoot up into saints or sinners!

Tickler. Wheesht, James!

Shepherd. Wheesht yoursel!

North. Education must now form the two—Will and Intellect—one with and by the other—or Education is lame, with one hand only, and, I fear, that the left.

Shepherd. Whulk?

Tickler. Wheesht!

North. Intellect does everything, or nearly, for Will, and Will everything for Intellect. But which is the ultimate object? Will, certainly. The Will is the Man.

Shepherd. Hear it—a' ye nations—the Will is the Man!

North. Our idea of education is too frequently one of schools and colleges, drawn thence, and formed upon them; but how small a part!

Shepherd. Sma' pairt indeed.

North. The roots of the Will are in the body—and the roots of Intellect in the Will.

Shepherd. In the body!

North. Yes, James, in the body. See how the state of the affections—which are Will—nourish even imagination, and how imagination acts into the purely intellectual faculties—and what vivacity mere health and joy will give to the memory, who, you know, in the olden time was called the mother of the Muses.

Shepherd. Sae, indeed, she was—Mymoshuny.

North. What, I ask you, James, can a listless child learn, an unwilling child understand?

Shepherd. Naething.

North. Will not a boy, whose heart is full of poetry, learn Greek in Homer, by the force of poetry, though he has a bad talent for languages?

Shepherd. Nae dout—nae dout. I sune learnt Erse in Ossian.

North. Will not thought and feeling make him a good speaker and writer at last, though he could never understand his grammar?

Shepherd. Confoond grammar!

North. The first thing is that the understanding grow in the Will, and the Will up through the heart of the understanding, and an Intellect of ten or twelve years old, may, so far, have been powerfully educated without a single lesson.

Shepherd. Mine was yedicated sae—whether poo'rfully or no, it's no for me to be tellin.

[*Timepiece strikes Twelve — and enter* AMBROSE, *bending under his load, with his Tail and Supper.*

North. Timothy—James—run to the support of mine host —or he faints and falls.

[*The* ARCADIAN *and* SOUTHSIDE *reach* AMBROSE *just in time to prevent his sinking to the floor.*

Ambrose. Thank ye, gentlemen; this burden is beyond my strength.

North. What is it?

Ambrose. The GLASGOW GANDER, sir.[1]

North. The great prize Glasgow gander! Rash man! even for one moment to have dreamt of bearing him in single-handed.

Shepherd. Mair strength! mair strength! Tappy, King Pip, Sir Dawvit!

The Pech. Coming, sir.

North. Let me give a lift.

[*By the united exertions of the Knights, and of the Household, the great Glasgow Gander is at last deposited, with some loss of gravy, on the table.*

Tickler. How it groans!

Shepherd. What! the gander?

Tickler. No, the quadruped under him—the table.

Shepherd. Props, Awmrose—props!

Ambrose. The timbers are all sound, gentlemen, and now that they have stood the first shock of the pressure——

Shepherd. I'se uphaud them for a croon.

Tickler. It is not the legs of the table I tremble for, but the joists of the floor.

Shepherd. Wha's aneath?

Ambrose. The coffee-room, sir.

North. Why, Mr Ambrose, in case of any accident, it might be a serious business; for, to say nothing of the deaths of so

[1] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 30, note 2.

many unoffending, yet I fear, unprepared individuals, actions of damages, at the instance of the relatives of the deceased, might be brought against us, the survivors——

Shepherd. Na, na—only again' the relatives o' the gander, and wha ever heard o' legal proceedings again' a flock o' geese?

North. Hush! did no one hear something creaking?

Tickler. Only a coach rattling down Leith Walk. Let us be seated.

North. Well, I had heard from several persons of credit who had seen him on his walk, that he was like the cow that swallowed Tom Thumb, "larger than the largest size;" but he out-Herods Herod—I should rather say, out-Goliaths Goliath.

Tickler. I am surprised his owner, instead of selling him, did not put him into a show. 'Twould have made his fortune.

Shepherd. Wha'll cut him up?

North. If you please—I.

Shepherd. Awmrose, you should hae sent an order to Brummagem for a knife on purpose.

North. Perhaps the usual instrument will do. How hot he is!

Shepherd. Let him cool, while we help ourselves to caulkers.

[*They help themselves to Caulkers till the Gander cools.*

North. A Gander is an amiable bird. You know, that while his wife, the Goose, whose duty it is to sit in general, on any particular occasion takes to her waddlers, her husband, the Gander, drops down with his doup on the eggs, and broods over them in the most maternal manner imaginable, looking fully as like a lady as a gentleman.

Tickler. He is apt, however, by the inferior heat resident in his dolp, to addle the eggs, or to vivify them into goslings that bear little analogy to the parent pair.

Shepherd. A feather-bed micht hae been made—I howp has been made—frae the fleece o' the feather'd fule—though I suspeck the smell may prove onything but soporific. The pluckins o' toon geese bring naething like the pund-wecht, compared to them that's bred in the kintra. They're sae coorse—ye see—and seldom or never sweet.

North. Our friend on the table is tame—but of wild geese I have heard many well-authenticated anecdotes, that denote prudence apparently beyond the reach of mere instinct. They

are sensible that a disposition to gabble is one of their weak points; and, on taking a flight through the air infested by eagles, or other birds of prey, they all provide themselves, each with a chucky-stane in his mouth, to hinder the proprietor thereof from betraying their transit to the enemy.[1] Could our poor fat friend, think ye, have been up to that stratagem, to silence and save himself in extremity?

Shepherd. No he. He would hae lettin the chucky drap frae his bill, preferring being gutted to nae gabble.

Tickler. A gander walking by a pond wi' a chucky-stane in his bill, reminds the classical scholar of Demosthenes on the sea-shore.

Shepherd. Haw—haw—haw!—curin himsel o' an impediment in his quack.

North. How is he now? Still, like Tailor's goose, hot and hissing.

Tickler. Let us put him into ice. Where's the bucket?

Shepherd. Dinna disturb again the haill household.

North. I once knew a gander, James, that, regularly every Sabbath, for several years, conducted an old blind woman to the kirk.

Tickler. Hypocrite! to be remembered in her will.

North. Residuary legatee.

Tickler. Our fat friend on the table, I fear, was no churchgoer.

Shepherd. I've kent ganders make capital watch-dowgs after a lang 'prenticeship.

Tickler. The most unaccountable fowl at first sight I remember ever to have witnessed, had the reputation in the parish of being the joint production of a gander and a duck.

Shepherd. What a squatter!

North. A gander, in the sporting circles, would be backed at odds, in pedestrianism, against a bubbly. For half a mile, the bubbly, being longer in the spald,[2] would outstep the gander, and probably reach the goal before him by half-an-hour. But let them travel from morn till dewy eve, and the bubbly at sunset uniformly goes to roost, while the gander, being of a more wakeful genius, waddles on, and by moonlight laughs to behold his competitor sound asleep in a tree.

[1] This anecdote rests on the authority of Plutarch and Ælian. Modern naturalists will probably not vouch for it. [2] *Spald*—limb.

Tickler. Our gander could not have done at last six yards an hour; for, like Hamlet, he was "fat and scant of breath."

Shepherd. Like Hamlet!

North. The gander, noble bird as he is, and stately, lives and dies without ever having taken to himself, either scientifically or empirically, his own altitude; so that, high as he holds his head in reality, 'tis not so high, by an immeasurable difference, as in his own towering imagination.

Tickler. I admire him most when, with bill hissing earthwards, and hinder-end affronting heaven, he expresses his scorn of the whole human race—like Timon of Athens.

North. In that posture he is, I grant, impressive; but surely sublimer far is the gander majestically stooping his forehead, as he walks under a gateway, some thirty feet high, considerate of the crown of the arch. What a union of dignity and condescension!

Tickler. Ay, every inch a king.

North. I remember seeing a gander on the morning of the day our late gracious King visited Dalkeith Palace, eyeing the triumphal arch which loyalty had erected at the entrance of those beautiful grounds and gardens, all greenly garlanded for the sovereign approach. He never doubted for a single moment that the pomp was all in honour of him—that to see him was gathered together that great multitude. The rushing of chariots was heard, the tramp of cavalry, and the blare of trumpets—and ten thousand voices cried "The King! The King!" The gander—prouder far than George the Fourth—whom he despised—at that instant waddled under the arch—down went the head, and up went the dolp of the despot—

"While unextinguished laughter shook the skies!"

Tickler. A few years ago, North, you will remember that a luminous arch—probably electrical—spanned the starry heavens. A gander of my acquaintance, sleepless mayhap in unrequited love, I met on a common, in the moonlight seeming a swan—and indeed, in their own estimation, all geese are swans. The heavenly apparition attracted his eye "in a fine frenzy rolling," and from the enthusiasm that characterised his whole manner, it was manifest that he opined erroneously, I should suppose, that the Wonder whose span and altitude at that moment philosophers were computing, had been flung

across the sky, simply for sake of him who "was stepping westwards," the victim of a hopeless passion. I believe the arch was about fifteen miles high—but the gander was afraid he might break it did he advance—

"In godlike majesty, erect and tall;"

and, accordingly, down head and up dolp, after the fashion aforesaid, and so, till he faded in the distance,

"Through Eden took his solitary way!"

North. What a grand figure the gander must have made on descending from the Ark! On the first dawning of the rainbow on the showery sky, down head and up dolp of the waddling worshipper.

Shepherd. Will you twa never be dune glorifyin ganders? — Forgettin, that noo is the time for deeds, not words — not for description, but execution.—Is he no cool yet?

North. Now let me cut him up.

Tickler. Not yet. Let him cool a little longer.

North. I shall never cease to regret that I did not see him alive; for if I had, I should unquestionably have had him skinned, and stuffed for the Museum in the Andersonian Institution.

Tickler. Do you remember the learned gander, North?

North. No. You don't mean to say *he* was so?

Tickler. Not at all. The learned gander I allude to was brought forward to put down the learned pig. Each had his admirers; but while it seemed to be pretty generally admitted that the pig was the quicker, the gander was thought to be more profound.

Shepherd. I dinna ken hoo it is, but I'm far frae likin his appearance. It's no wholesome. There's either a dead rat ahint the wainscot, or he's stinkin.

North. Poo—poo—poo! stinking! he was gabbling this day week.

Shepherd. He may have been gabblin, and hissin, and squatterin too this day week; but if he's no stinkin noo, I've no olfactory nerves in my nostrils.

North. I begin to believe that I do scent something——

Shepherd. Foumartish.

Tickler. He's in bad odour.

Shepherd. In smell as weel's in size, he far beats ony Solan.

North. Gentlemen, I am ready at the slightest signal to cut him up; yet prudence seems to suggest the propriety of first puncturing him with the prongs of this fork, to let out any foul air that may have collected within his breast.

Shepherd. Stop, sir. What if a' that mass o' appawrent flesh be naething but a foul congregation o' vapours, pent by teugh skin within the deceitfu' and absurd rotundity o' the gander? Prick it wi' the prang, and out they'll fizz — fizz — fizz—as frae a crack in a steam-engine; and the consequences may be fatal, sir, not only to us Three and the other occupiers o' this house, but to the inhabitants o' the haill lan', nay, o' the city—let me not scruple to say, the kingdom at large; nor, should the evil extend so widely, is it likely that it will be contented to confine its ravages within the limits of our sea-beat shores, but in all human probability will pass the straits from Dover to Calais, and infeck France, and, through her Spain, and the Netherlands, &c., till a pestilence prevail over unhappy Europe — ere long of course to take possession of Asia—nor for my ain part, do I see how America and Africa can reasonably expeck to escape the general visitation; —and a' this frae just pittin a prang intil the braid blawn-up breist o' the great Glasgow gander! Weel micht Pope say,

"What dire events frae trivial causes spring!"

North. The picture you have drawn, James, of the probable effects of such an eruption, is at once natural and alarming; yet I am disposed to believe, that though much foul air there no doubt must be in the animal, swollen out as we see him, much of it must have escaped in opposite directions, when, under the hands of a gang of Girzzies, he gave up the ghost.

Shepherd. Doutless — doutless. Then we should consider his wecht. Mere foul air could never have had yon wecht—no it—so gie him the pint o' the prang.

Tickler. May I be allowed humbly to suggest a proposal, in which, however selfish it may seem, I can lay my hand on my heart, and with a safe conscience declare, that I have nothing so much in view as the lives of his gracious Majesty's most loyal subjects?

Shepherd. Haud your han', Mr North. Tickler, what is't?

Tickler. That we all—*plug.*

Shepherd. That we a' plug! What's that?

Tickler. To plug, James, being interpreted, means to stuff both nostrils tightly, closely, and firmly with tobacco quiddities—and thus is the nasal promontory prevented from absorbing the infection—and the whole man gander-proof.

Shepherd. Then let us a' plug.

[*Enter the* PECH *with a coil of tobacco, and they plug.*

North. Now to business.

Tickler. Stop, sir——

North (*impatiently*). Tickler, I won't be interrupted——

Tickler. Steel, if you please, sir. There is no occasion to run into needless expense — and as the same instrument can never be used again, except indeed for a similar purpose, which, in the ordinary and due course of nature, is not likely to recur—why a silver fork?

North. Well, steel be it. But no more interruption——

Shepherd. Stop, sir, stop just for a moment. Hadna we better send for some o' Sir Humphry Davy's Safety Lamps?

North. Nonsense, James. You don't understand the principle of that admirable invention.

Tickler. Let us veil our faces with our bandanas.

North. Safer bare. Now.

[NORTH *plunges the fork into the gander, and the Snuggery is insupportably afflicted with a strange stench, strong as the Jakes.*

Shepherd. Fa' a' doun on your faces, or we'll be smoored.

North (*holding his nose*). Please, Tickler, to open the windows.

Tickler. How can I, when you see how my hands are occupied?

North. How?

Tickler. Like your own.

(*Enter* PICARDY *and Tail—all nose in hand.*)

Ambrose. Beg pardon, gentlemen, for the intrusion; but some ladies have fainted in the blue parlour.

Shepherd (*recovering from a swoon*). Said ye the common shewer had burst under the foundations o' Picardy Place, or hae I been dreamin, and am noo waukened to the reality o' that unsupportable goose, the Great Glasgow Gander?

Ambrose. The Great Glasgow Gander he assuredly is, gentlemen; and I have kept as a curiosity the certificate that was

round his neck—a certificate signed by two witnesses besides his original owner, that he was the self-same animal aforesaid, and no counterfeit.

North. Having gone thus far, we must not recede. He must be cut up.

[North *dexterously cuts a circular hole in the apron, off with the dolp, and scores the breast with scientific scarification.*

Corrupt as a rotten borough!

Tickler. Cholera Morbus?

Shepherd. Na—that would hae pu'd him doun. No Cholera Morbus.

North. The disease is in the liver——

Tickler. And lights.

Shepherd. Hoo could he possibly hae been cyuckt?[1]

Tickler. A mystery—like Byron's *Cain.*

North. The fire has kindled the original sin—the bile with which his whole system was imbued by nature—and smell the result!

Shepherd. O, sirs! O, sirs! what think ye hae they dune wi' his inside? Hoo disposed o' the entrails?

Ambrose (*coughing, and in a faint voice*). The sewer runs to the sea.

Tickler. Then I, for one, eat no fish for a twelvemonth.

Shepherd. Oh! the puir harmless haddies![2]

North. Why stand ye staring there, Picardy, with your long useless tail! Away with the Pest, and let it be

"In the deep bosom of the ocean—buried."

[Picardy *and his Tail, after much severe suffering, with which we are sure all Christian souls must sympathise, bear away the Gander.*

Shepherd. This is dreadfu'. It gets waur and waur.

Tickler—

"Deeper and deeper still!"

North. We must have the Snuggery incensed and fumigated. Here, James, burn this lavender—Tickler, sprinkle this musk——

Shepherd. Oh that bawdrons[3] there—bockin[4] within the fender—were but a civet!

[1] *Cyuckt*—cooked.

[2] *Haddies*—haddocks.

[3] *Bawdrons*—a cat.

[4] *Bockin*—retching.

Tickler. I always carry in my bosom a camphor-bag to allay my passions—there it kindles into a flame.

North. How providential Shepherd's Ambrosial Fumigating Pastiles!

Shepherd. Alas! alas! a' wunna do! The dead sea o' smell neither ebbs nor flows—but keeps thickening in stagnant stench.

[*Enter* AMBROSE, MON. CADET, KING PEPIN, SIR DAVID GAM, TAPPYTOORIE, *and the* PECH, *with Pitch-Pine-Torches.*

North. The smell subsides.

Shepherd. Slaw's the ebb.

Tickler. I seem to breathe, already, in a purer atmosphere.

Shepherd. Unplug. [*The General Assembly unplugs.*

North. Bring in a couple of casks of Glenlivet—knock in the heads—and in a few minutes the Snuggery will be as sweet as a Still——

Shepherd. Amang the bonny bloomin heather!

[*The casks are brought in—and the purification is magical.*

Tickler. Now, North—a song. Theodore Hook himself is not a more brilliant *improvisatore* than Christopher North. I give the theme—The Glasgow Gander.

North. Tune and measure?

Tickler. Take Lockhart's noble song, "O the Broad Swords of Old Scotland—and oh the Scottish Broad Swords!"

[NORTH *rises—and leaning on the crutch—after clearing his throat with a caulker—is thus inspired.*

THE GANDER OF GLASGOW.

I sing of the Gander we've got from the West,
Who alive was each peaceable passenger's pest,
And who now is so loathsome and rank when he's drest—
Oh! the great Gander of Glasgow—
Oh! the great Goose of the West!

In what bed of nettles he first saw the light,
Is a point that is hid in the darkness of night,
And we'll leave it to those who such Chronicles[1] write,
As that of the Gander of Glasgow,
The great gabbling Goose of the West.

[1] The Gander was the editor of a newspaper called *The Chronicle.*

Of this I know nothing—nor can I surmise
How or where he grew up to such hideous size,—
For I ne'er heard his name till he first got the prize
As the wonderful Gander of Glasgow,
The King of the Geese of the West.

But henceforth behold him in Glasgow's fair town,
Full fraught with the thoughts of his well-fed renown,—
His head held on high, and his rump drooping down,
The great prize Gander of Glasgow—
The pride of the Geese of the West.

The old Roman Gander that guarded the state,
Was not more absurdly majestic in gait,
Than once was the gander that lies on that plate,—
The great hirpling Gander of Glasgow,
The great cackling Goose of the West.

There was surely in Nature no sight so absurd
As the aspect of this most preposterous bird—
And surely no gabble was ever yet heard
Like that of the Gander of Glasgow,
The great gabbling Goose of the West.

With pinions half-folded his course see him steer!
Oh! if any one sight more grotesque could appear
Than the Gander in front, 'twas the Gander in rear—
The rear of the Gander of Glasgow,
The rump of the Goose of the West!

This ponderous creature of mud and of mire,
Always looked as he'd set the Guse-dubs upon fire;
So absurd in his pride, and so fierce in his ire,
Was the great hissing Gander of Glasgow,
The preposterous Goose of the West!

Full many a bout had the Bubbly[1] and he,
For their trades were so like they could never agree,
And their gabbling and gobbling 'twas fearful to see,
Alarming the Gorbals of Glasgow,
The peace of the Queen of the West.

[1] *Bubbly*—turkey-cock.

The Damsels of Glasgow were stricken with fear,
And fled in dismay when the Gander was near,—
And his LEDA herself must have hated the leer
Of the odious Gander of Glasgow,
The ill-favoured Goose of the West!

Then, vain as he was, how he showed his poor spite
To each bird of a nobler and loftier flight,
Whose region of glory lay far out of sight
Of the blear-eyed Gander of Glasgow,—
The great gaping Goose of the West.

Have you e'er seen a dunce whose unfortunate lot
Is to rail at the laurels of Southey or Scott?
You almost might swear that a hint he had got
From the envious Gander of Glasgow,—
The pitiful Goose of the West.

And whenever you hear such a dunce's abuse,
The cause is the same, and the same the excuse;
"He's only a Gander, the son of a Goose,
Like him of the Gorbals of Glasgow,—
The foul-feeding Goose of the West."

Thus lived the great Gander;—but this could not last,
And a gloom o'er the Guse-dubs at length there was cast,
For his days they were numbered—the sentence was passed,
That silenced the Gander of Glasgow,
The ill-fated Goose of the West!

For the Agent of AMBROSE, who lived in the place,
Had his eye on the bird, as the chief of his race,—
And resolved that his carcass THE NOCTES should grace,
For the glory of Geese and of Glasgow,
The much-boasted Queen of the West!

'Twould offend against taste, and might shock the humane,
To tell how the Gander was put out of pain;
And the plucking and basting we need not explain,
Of the ribs of the Gander of Glasgow—
The great greasy Goose of the west.

He had not been placed on the spit very long,
When Ambrose suspected that something was wrong,—
For he ne'er smelt a Goose so confoundedly strong

As the nauseous Gander of Glasgow,
The rank-smelling Goose of the West!

And now he's cut up, and his breast is laid bare,
Oh! what foulness, and rankness, and rottenness there!
'Twould sicken the patron of Burke and of Hare
To look on the Gander of Glasgow,
The hideous Goose of the West!

Now with conduct and carcass so much of a piece,
What are we to think of this foulest of Geese,
But that some Glasgow Whig must have taken a lease
Of the name of "The Gander of Glasgow,"
The King of the Geese of the West!

'Tis hard to believe, in this sceptical age,
In migration of souls, like the Samian sage;
But the soul of some Whig, in corruption's last stage,
Must have dwelt in the Gander of Glasgow,
The unfortunate Goose of the West!

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw! was that really, sir, an extemporawneous impromptу?

North. Sung on the spur of the instant, I assure you, James. Indeed, how would it be otherwise? For Ambrose had provided for me an after-piece, which he thought would be "The Agreeable Surprise"——

Tickler. To follow "The Cock of the North," a mellow dram in three caulkers——

Shepherd. No that unwutty, Tickler.

North. Nor could my prophetic soul anticipate the Gander. But next Noctes, I promise you a more regular and finished performance.

Tickler. Some epigrams.

North. And epitaphs, Tickler; epithalamia and epicedia—different kinds of composition—though old Pirie of the *Morning Chronicle* thought them one and the same——

Tickler. And sung commonly at christenings.

North. But now, gentlemen, we must be toddling——

Shepherd—

"Roun' as a neep[1] we'll gang toddlin hame."

Hoo sweet the Snuggery! Nae noxious air can lang pol-

[1] *Neep*—turnip.

lute its pure privacy, ventilated, at a' seasons, wi' the breath o' humanest merriment.

North. Yes, James, again "the air smells wooingly."

Shepherd. As in a heather dell.

North. Lo, a red-deer!

[*North bounds over the circular like a Stag-of-Ten.*

Shepherd (*holding up his hands*). Wonnerfu' auld man!

[TICKLER *leaps upon the* SHEPHERD'S *shoulders, and the scene shifts to the street.*

XXX.

(APRIL 1831.)

Scene,—The Snuggery. Time,—Nine o'clock. Present, North, Tickler, *and* Shepherd.—*Tea, Coffee, Caulkers, &c. &c. &c.*

Shepherd. Receet the passage again, sir — for oh! but it's beautifu', and I couldna hae believed that it was Milton's.

Tickler. Milton is worth all your modern poets in a lump, were you to multiply them by——

Shepherd. But we shanna put them a' into a lump, Mr Tickler —nor multiply their multiplicand by any multiplicawtor whatsomever; for I hae nae notion o' slumpin inspiration in that gate, a sair injustice to a' individual Genie. Let ilka poet, great and sma', staun' on his ain feet, and no be afeared o' the takin o' his altitude, by quadrants in the hauns o' geometrical critics —excepp them that sits on ane anither's knees, and they may just keep sittin there; and them that tries to owertap their betters, by getting theirsels hoisted up upon stools or tables —to say little or naething o' twa-three mair wha shall be nameless, that speels up the backs o' the brither-bards, and look proudly alang the heads o' the crood, seemingly higher by head and shouthers than their supporters and elevators, but wha are sure to get a fa' at last—and then, wae's me! they're trampled aneath hoofs, and never mair recover either their hats or their laurels. But receet the passage again, Mr North.

(North *recites.*)

"Now came still evening on, and twilight grey
Had in her sober livery all things clad.
Silence accompanied—for bird and beast,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,

Were slunk—all but the wakeful nightingale—
She all night long her amorous descant sung.
Silence was pleased: now glowed the firmament
With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."[1]

Shepherd. How beautifully progressive, sir, up to the tap-most pitch o' nocturnal beauty!

North. Seemingly most simple, James, yet, believe me, steeped, every syllable and sentence, in imagination. Had it not been so, be assured, the "divine Milton" had never introduced so long a description into *Paradise Lost.* Natural it might have been, without being imaginative; but, in that case, it would have disfigured instead of improving the poem.

Shepherd. It may be sae. I ken naething, for my ain pairt, about imagination—that's to say, the secret o' its power. For I'm a poet and nae metaphysician; whereas the late Dr Thomas Brown—wha, by the by, was aye unco kind to me—was a metaphysician, but nae poet.

North. Coleridge is both—so is Wordsworth—so is Bowles—and so was Byron. For my own part, James, I am neither——

Shepherd. That's true.

North. What's true, sir? Do you dare to say that I am not sup——

Shepherd. I'm wullin, Mr North, to alloo ye the possession o' a' the powers that ever glorified humanity, gin you would but gie ower layin traps for compliments to your genius and tawlents—fishin for flatteries, no only frae the likes o' me—for that I can understaun' and sympatheese wi'—but frae fules and sumphs o' a' ages and sexes—sometimes wi' the flea, and sometimes wi' the worm—and sometimes wi' the baggy-mennon—and sometimes wi' the sawmon-rae—and, when nae bait 'ill catch them, wi' the very naked hyuck, or a girn![2]

North. I acknowledge—I confess—I glory in that impeachment. Without sympathy, James, there is

"A craving void left aching at my heart."

[1] *Paradise Lost,* iv. 598-609.

[2] *Girn*—a snare.

'Tis like the air I breathe—without it I die. That's the secret of my seeming love of——

Shepherd. Weel, weel—I believe you—judging by mysel—but what o' the passage?

North. The imagination, therein, my dear Shepherd, is conceivable to be, either in the successive objects or portions of description, that is, severally, in each; or not in each singly, but in the conjunction of them in the whole.

Shepherd. Or baith ways at ance.

North. True. What then may be the Imagination of the successive members of the whole? Rather, is there any, and what is it, in them, in this example? For it may be whatever it is in real objects.

Shepherd. I'm perplexed already—what's your wull?

North. There appears to be much of that kind of Imagination which consists in infused animation and undefined incipient impersonation. "Now *came still evening* on," and "Twilight grey had in her sober livery all things *clad*." "Silence *accompanied*."

Shepherd. You say richt, sir—three impersonifications.

North. If I could suppose that here were meant to be introduced three distinct figured personages, taken out of Italian poetry, and all sorts of poetical writing, for some hundreds of years, I should be sorry. I hope and confide that Milton meant no more than that degree of alteration of things from their reality which forces itself irresistibly upon us, in certain proper moods of contemplating them.

Shepherd. Imaginative moods.

North. Try to consider each expression as literally as you can, and suppose that Milton meant to represent the objects as nearly what they are, to the simple understanding, as poetical feeling, predominant, would suffer him. Try how much the word Evening is forced from meaning the mere season or hour. "*Came on*" seems to mean more than that the Evening succeeded to the day. In the first place, it severs the hour, as having a unity in itself; in the next, it attributes to the season a power of advancing, an energy of progress of its own.

Tickler. Come, be clear, North—no mysticism.

North. What! are you listening? *Detur*, that the proper idea of Evening to the understanding, is of a certain state of

external affairs, then coexistent with a particular portion of diurnal rotation:—*Detur*, that the *natural* idea of Evening superadds to this something of positiveness in the season of existence, of unity, a distinct entity in it.

Tickler. Begin then, my metaphysical master, with an explanation of the *natural* idea of Evening, and then show us what of Poetry or Imagination—if any—Milton has added, out of his divine mind, to that Idea.

Shepherd. That's the richt method o' procedure, sure aneuch, Mr North. Mr Tickler's a clear-headed tyke.

North. You will observe, then, that the accustomed idea of Evening has in it a degree of work of imagination, since in it that darkness, or less light, which is merely the state, or fact, of certain objects being less illuminated than for some time past they have been, is conceived by us, in the first place, as a positive existing dusk; and in the second, as brought on by a certain hour or season, which hour or season, being in effect nothing but a portion of the admeasurement of time, appears to us to be made up, and consist of, in part, those appearances in nature which are merely its accompaniments,—amongst others, for instance, of that very darkness which at the same time it appears to bring;—the hour, properly considered, can bring nothing: it can only coexist with other things, or become existent along with them. And in all ideas of day, night, seasons, &c., there is such illusion.

Tickler. As the old Schoolmen used to say—

"In omnem sensus actum influit Imaginatio."

North. Correctly quoted, Tim? Nevertheless, there must be an idea of Evening, which being the universal idea, and as necessarily conceived by the human understanding as that the Sun sets, though mixed in part of illusory conception, is not, for the purposes of poetry, to be accounted imagination.

Tickler. Granted.

North. Let us take, then, this accustomed, simple, necessary idea, and see how far the expressions of the passage in question go beyond it. It shall then appear, that in Milton's expressions there is conceived something more, namely, of the motion of that which has no motion; and, as I think, of an energy, and almost a will of motion in itself. In some way, the words are lifted out of prose, and but a little way. The

epithet "still," though as ordinary an epithet to Evening as you can find, enhances the effect, the separation of Evening, from being nothing but a state, with time, of external existence.

Tickler. But you must make out more distinctly, sir, the division between the natural imagination which is in our usual idea of Evening, and the heightened imagination that is in Milton's expressions.

North. I will. If you go through the description, you find, as to each object of thought, some heightening of the same sort. "Twilight had *clad*,"—an energy of action. Even "Silence *accompanied*,"—is an act,—and an act of that which is so far from being something, that it is not even the negation of an entity, but the negation of certain actions of entities. Besides, whatever it is, it is included in the state of external things. It does not "accompany." "Hesperus *that led*,"—"*host*,"—"*rode* brightest,"—"*clouded majesty*,"—"*queen*,"—"*unveiled her* light,"—observe here is, at every point almost, a heightening from the inanimate reality. The only part of the description which is without alteration from reality, is *bird and beast*, they being already animate. What is to be remarked, in respect to them, is merely the generalising way in which they are disposed of, and perhaps the word "slunk." Now, supposing the description to be a tolerably good one, we may say that every step of it falls under imagination, severally. The objects being either such as naturally affect imagination without any heightening from the peculiar and strong feelings of the poet, or being brought under imagination, or their natural imagination enhanced by such heightenings. The nightingale singing sole, is in herself an object to imagination. I do not take "*living* sapphires" to have the sense of that infused animation which belongs to impersonation, but merely the effect to the eye. The firmament "*glowed*," may have a slight degree of imagination. There is something in the conception beyond what the cold understanding gives.

Tickler. You have explained your meaning well, sir.

Shepherd. Middlin.

North. Is there, then, I ask, gentlemen, besides this imagination in the parts, any imaginative effect in the whole—that is, an effect resulting from the combination of all the parts?

I am inclined to think there is, and that the impression which is left from the whole is that of a LIVING CALM.

Shepherd. A Leevin Cawm!

North. If so, the contribution of every part to the effect of the whole is intelligible. The stillness throughout—the song that does not disturb silence—the lights so serene and yet pregnant with life—the infused animation of every object that has not—and the sufficiency of animation in those that have it—have all a perfect propriety. It may not belong exactly to the question I am considering——

Shepherd. What question?

North. ——though it does to the poetical analysis of the passage, to show the skilful progress of impressiveness.

Shepherd. Ah, ah! ma man! You're borrowin frae me noo —for that's the verra first observe I made on your selectin the passage.

North. So much the better, James. Observe then, on the whole, each object rising in this respect above another—and yet not by a scale. For instance, when real living creatures are introduced, it is done in gradation, first, those that sleep, then the night-singer, in whom the feeling of animal natural life is raised to its height, by the line "She all night long her *amorous* descant sung." And immediately a great tranquillisation follows, and that animal vitality is blotted out by insensate things, and no pulse or breathing is more, save those which circulate in space, and in the bosom of universal nature.

Shepherd. Still following out ma original idea!

North. Detur, that all I have said is right—here is then shown by an instance what is meant properly by a poetical description—that is to say, of many ways believed, one way is shown in which a description is placed under the reign of Imagination.

Shepherd. Aneuch. Be dune, sir.

North. This is the preparatory part of the inquiry. Then ensues this other question—What is in this instance the character, quality, nature of the affection of imagination? It is plain, in the first place, that it is essentially *feeling*. Secondly, that it is feeling of a singular, remote, and rather mysterious kind. Thirdly, the feeling is that which accompanies and enters into the lower degrees of impersonation. If the impression resulting from the whole, is that which I have endeavoured

to render by the expression, a LIVING CALM, this belongs to the same mode of imagination. It is as if the vast and deep tranquillity, the very rest and peace, were self-conscious.

Tickler. You're a clever lad, Kit,—*Perge puer.*

North. It may be proper here to repeat, that in this particular act or mode of imagination, the analysis of imagination gives this form, which always appears to me to be the essential and proper form of imagination, viz., that an object being given to the understanding, by a new and further intellectual act, a feeling not proper to the object (that is, not proper to it in its truth, as conceived by the understanding) is superinduced upon it. Try this in one or two instances. "Silence was pleased." What is given to the understanding? The noiselessness and hush of night—and song delighting the ear, and not disturbing to the heart, but rather quickening and deepening the affection, produced by the general hush and repose. But herein moved imagination perceives a listening spirit of silence—and that pleasure which is felt by the bodily imagined witness, the poet, or any other, and that non-disturbance and rather vivifying and intensifying of his affection of stillness and peace, is, by a turn of imagination, transferred to that spirit which is conceived to be pleased with, and, instead of being annihilated, to exist in more animation by virtue of those sounds. There is here both a production and a variation of thought, beyond or after, or from what is given, proper to the understanding. Is there, by means of these further intellectual acts, any new different feeling induced towards the object of the understanding? Undoubtedly there is, though the difference may be difficult to define. For it is quite impossible that we should look with the same affection of feeling on objects materially different, though it is often difficult to ascertain what our feeling is, especially towards objects which do not affect us with strong emotion; as indeed very many of the feelings of imagination are of so slight, delicate, fine a kind, that we hardly know how to speak of them, or to call them feeling, they are so infinitely remote from the vehement and possessing power of ordinary passion. Our feeling, or the affection of our mind, the disposition to feel, cannot be the same towards objects so different as the actual silence of nature, and that vivified silence having a soul into which song is instilled. The affection with which we consider silence itself, including

in it the idea of tranquillity, is that of tranquillity mixed with something of solemnity, and from its vacancy of fear. But if silence is considered as "LIVING," the sense of solemnity is taken off in some degree—that of fear altogether.

Shepherd. Weel, thank Heaven, this metafeesical inquiry, for it was nae less, into the natur o' imagination, is ower, and that I hae survived it, though rather a wee fentish—sae let's drap in a thimmle-fu' o' cognac intil this—is't the seventh or aucht cup, think ye, sir, o' coffee?—and fortified by the speerit, I wad fain trust that sae I shall be able to endure the severest conversation it is in the poo'r o' man to inflick. Mr Tickler, spoot you, in your turn, a screed o' Milton.

Tickler.—

> "The other Shape,
> If Shape it might be called, that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joint or limb;
> Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
> For each seemed either; black it stood as Night,
> Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
> And shook a dreadful dart; what seemed its head
> The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
> Satan was now at hand——"[1]

Shepherd (*looking round*). What said ye! Sawtan at haun!

North. Speak of the Devil and he'll appear, is a general rule, my dear James, subject to an occasional exception. Regain your composure.

Shepherd. It's a fearsome passage.

Tickler (*taking North's crutch under his arm and imitating the voice, gesture, and manner of the "old man eloquent"*). In this sublime passage, the power of Imagination is at its height. This Being, who, at the gates of hell, offers combat to Satan, has not even yet been named, as if the poet were so lost in the emotion accompanying the sight of the phantom he had himself conjured up, that even a very name had not risen yet for what was so unsubstantial. He scarcely dares to call it by the vague term "Shape;" but as soon as he does so, qualifies even that approach to substantiality, by saying, "if Shape it might be called, which shape had none distinguishable," or "substance might be called that shadow seemed." Then he adds that still farther feeling of unreality—"each

[1] *Paradise Lost*, ii. 666-674.

seemed either," that is, substance seemed shadow, shadow seemed substance. Thus uncertain in its horror to his eyes, "black it seemed as night;" not utter darkness, but something black and grim, "darkness visible"— fierce — not as a Fury—for that would be something too definite, since the image of a fury is of something conceived to exist—but fierce as ten furies, an expression in which all individuality is lost, and nothing conveyed to the mind but an idea of aggregated and accumulated fierceness. "Terrible as hell" is still more vague, and purposely so, or rather so under the power of the emotion; yet in all this obscurity, unsubstantiality, and shadowiness, *it*[1] shook a dreadful dart (observe how much effect is in that word, *it*), something not described by any quality, as of size or shape, but merely "dreadful"—how, why, or in what dreadful, we know not; while this motion of its weapon directs the mind to look on the Shape that brandishes it, and lo! that which seemed its head — not its head, but that which in that fury-haunted and infernal darkness seemed its head—the likeness—not the reality—but the likeness of a kingly crown had on! Poetry alone could give such an Imagination as this — for painting would at once of necessity give outlines, features, realities, which, however enveloped in obscurity, would be fatal to the fearful effect, and embody too sensibly the here almost unembodied attributes of this seeming, shadowy, threatening, scarcely-existing, yet most terrific Impersonation!

Shepherd. Had ma twa een been shut the noo, like them o' a Methodist minister sayin grace, I could hae sworn that you was Mr North, Mr Tickler. His verra vice! And then, as to the matter, the same licht o' truth fitfully brichtenin through the glimmer or gloom o' a mair or less perfeck incomprehensibility. An' that's what you twa chiels ca' pheelosofical creetyschism?

Tickler. Pray recite, James, a passage from the *Excursion*, that I may make it undergo a similar process of investigation into the principles of composition.

Shepherd. Mee receet a passage frae *The Excursion?*

[1] In Schiller's Ballad of "The Diver," the word "it" is used with the same effect: *da Krock's heran*, there *it* (the shapeless sea-monster) was creeping near. "The *It* in the original," says Sir E. B. Lytton, "has been greatly admired. The poet thus vaguely represents the fabulous misshapen monster, the Polypus of the ancients."—*The Poems and Ballads of Schiller*, p. 8, 2d edition.

North. What is your opinion of that Poem, Tickler?

Tickler. The Excursion is full of fine poetry, but it is not what the author intended it to be, and believes that it is — a Great Poem. Mr Wordsworth cannot conceive a mighty plan. His imagination is of the first order; but his intellect does not seem to me, who belong, you know, North, to the old school, commanding and comprehensive. His mind has many noble visions, but they come and go, each in its own glory; a phantasmagorial procession, beautiful, splendid, sublime, but not anywhere forming a Whole, on which the spectator can gaze, entranced by the power of unity.

Shepherd. Entranced by the power o' Unity! Havers—clavers!

Tickler. Considered as a work that is to hand down his name to future ages, among those of our great English poets, our Spensers and our Miltons, I must think it a failure, and that it will for ever exclude him from that band of immortals. But you have taught me, sir, to see that it contains passages of such surpassing excellence, in the description of external nature, and in the delineation of feeling, passion, and thought, that I think they may be set by the side of the best passages of a similar kind to be found within the whole range of poetry.

Shepherd. That's praise aneuch to satisfy ony reasonable man.

North. We are not now speaking for the satisfaction of Mr Wordsworth, but of ourselves——

Shepherd. And the warld.

North. My admiration of Mr Wordsworth's genius is well known to the universe, and has often been expressed with more enthusiasm than has been accompanied by the sympathies even of the wisest. I hope it is nevertheless judicious; and I have always given reasons for my delight in his works. But the admiration of some of his critics has, of late years, been anything but judicious; and the language in which it has been expressed, so outrageous, as to do greater injury to his just and fair fame, than all the attacks of his mightiest or meanest enemies. *The Excursion* has been often compared by the Cockneys with *Paradise Lost;* and that portion of the Reading Public who know something of Mr Wordsworth's poetry, but not much, have become indignant and disgusted at such foolery, and transferred, unconsciously, to the bard

himself some of those ungenial feelings with which it was inevitable and right that they should regard the idiots who had set him up as their idol. His genius is indeed worthy of far other worship.

Tickler. With Milton! Shakespeare! forsooth! Why, *Paradise Lost* is, by the consent of all the civilised world, declared to be the grandest and most sublime poem that ever emanated from the mind of man, equally so in conception and execution. It embraces all that human beings can feel or comprehend of themselves, their origin, and their destiny. *The Excursion* is an eloquent and poetical journal of a few days' walk among the mountains of the north of England, kept by one of the party, in which every syllable, good, bad, and indifferent, that was uttered by the three friends, was carefully recorded, and many connecting descriptions introduced by the journalist himself, who was the only one of the trio who had "the accomplishment of verse." I have said enough already to expose the frantic folly of those who speak in the same breath of *Paradise Lost* and *The Excursion.*

Shepherd. Quite aneuch.

North. I am delighted to find you so reasonable, Tickler.

Tickler. Nay, I am even an enthusiastic Wordsworthian.

North. Although the plan of *The Excursion* is altogether inartificial, and far from felicitous in any respect, yet it affords room for the display of Mr Wordsworth's very original genius, which delights in description of all that is grand and beautiful, on the earth, and in the heavens above the earth, and which is, on all such occasions, truly creative. The Three Friends wander wherever the wind wafts them, poetising and philosophising in the solitudes. Sometimes the objects before them awaken their spirits — the rocks, or the houses, or the clouds —and not unfrequently they forget "the visible diurnal sphere," and, in fine flights of imagination, visit the uttermost parts of the earth. The "impulses of deeper kind that come to them in solitude," they delightedly obey; and soon as those impulses cease, they are all equally willing, according to the finest feelings of humanity, to cross the thresholds of "huts where poor men lie," and to converse of, or with them, cheerfully and benignantly; or when more solemn thoughts again arise, to walk into the Churchyard among the Mountains, and muse and meditate among the stoneless turfs above the humble dead, or among the pillars of the sacred pile, on which hang

the escutcheons, or are painted the armorial bearings, of the high-born ancestry of hall and castle.

Shepherd. Ay, sir, these Books are delichtfu'—divine.

North. I love to hear you say so, my dear James. They are divine.

Tickler. Would that all those exquisite pictures had been by themselves, without the cumbrous machinery of the clumsy plan—if plan it may be called.

North. It is obvious that a parallel might be drawn, though I have no intention now of doing so, between *The Excursion* and *The Task*. Wordsworth, if not by nature, certainly by the influences of his life, has far higher enthusiasm of soul than Cowper. He has seen far more of the glories of creation than it was given that other great poet to see; and hence, when he speaks of external nature, his strains are generally of a loftier mood. But Cowper was not ambitious — and Wordsworth's chief fault is ambition. The author of *The Task* loved nature for her own sake—the author of *The Excursion* loves her chiefly for the sake of the power which she inspires within him—for the sake of the poetry that his gifted spirit flings over all her cliffs, and infuses into all her torrents. It often requires great effort to follow Wordsworth in his hymns—nor can any reader do so who has not enjoyed some of the same privileges in youth that have all his life long been open to that poet—above all, the privileges of freedom from this world's carking cares, enjoyed to the uttermost among the steadfast spectacles, or sudden apparitions of nature. But almost all persons alike, who have ever lived in the country at all, can go along with Cowper. Fields, hedgerows, groves, gardens, all common rural sights and sounds, and those too of all the seasons, are realised in *The Task*, so easily and naturally, that we see and hear as we read, with minds seldom, perhaps, greatly elevated above the everyday mood, but touched with gentle and purest pleasure, and filled with a thousand delightful memories. Wordsworth's finest strains can be felt or understood only when our imagination is ready to ascend to its highest sphere—and to the uninitiated they must be unintelligible, and that is indeed their very highest praise. But the finest things in *The Task* may be enjoyed at all times, and almost by every cultivated mind. That too is their highest praise. To which of the two kinds of poetry the palm should be given, it would be hard to say; but it is easy to know which of the two must

be the more popular. Were it for nothing else than its rural descriptions, *The Task* would still be a favourite poem with almost all classes of readers. Noble as they are, and, in our opinion, frequently equal, if not superior to anything of the kind in poetry, the rural descriptions of Wordsworth (rural is but a poor word here) can never be sympathised with by the million, for not ten in a thousand are, by constitution or custom, capable to understand their transcendent excellence.

Tickler. There must, I fear, be some wrong-headedness in the poet, who, from the whole range of human life, deliberately selected a pedlar for his highest philosophical character in a philosophical poem.

Shepherd. Dinna abuse pedlars, Mr Tickler. In Scotland they're aye murdered.

Tickler. Mr Jeffrey murdered the pedlar in *The Excursion.*

Shepherd. Na. Mr Wordsworth.

North. No impertinence, gents.

Shepherd. Nae wut without a portion o' impertinence.

North. Therefore I am never witty.

Shepherd. But then, you see, you may be impertinent, as you was the noo, notwithstanding.

North. The first twenty pages of *The Excursion* enable the reader to know on what grounds, and for what reasons, Mr Wordsworth has chosen, in a moral work of the highest pretensions, to make his chief and most authoritative interlocutor a pedlar. Much small wit has been sported on the subject, about pieces of tape and ribbon, thimbles, penknives, knee-buckles, pin-cushions, and other pedlar-ware; and perhaps such associations, and others, essentially mean or paltry, must, to a certain extent, connect themselves in most, or all minds, with the idea of such a calling. There is neither difficulty nor absurdity, however, in believing that an individual, richly endowed with natural gifts, may be a pedlar—and certainly that mode of life not only furnishes, but offers the best opportunities to a man of a thoughtful and feeling mind, of becoming intimately and thoroughly acquainted with all the ongoings of humble life. Robert Burns was an exciseman. Yet it does not follow from this, that there is wisdom in the choice of such a small retired merchant for the chief spokesman in a series of dialogues, in which one of the greatest poets of England is to take a part. Of many things spoken of in those dialogues, such a pedlar, in virtue of his profession, was an excellent

judge; but of many more the knowledge is not only not peculiarly appropriate to a pedlar, but such knowledge as could only, I conceive, have been accumulated and mastered by a man of finished classical education. We fear, therefore, that there is something absurd in his language about Thebes, and "Palmyra central in the desert,"[1] nor less so in the profound attention with which he listens to the "Poet's" still more eloquent, most poetical, and philosophical disquisition on the origin of the heathen mythology.[2] But admitting this, none but the shallowest and weakest minds will allow themselves to be overcome by a word. Blot out the word *pedlar* from the poem, substitute, as Charles Lamb well remarked, the word *palmer*, and the poem is then relieved from this puny and futile objection. Let his previous history be unknown—his birth and parentage—and let him be merely said to be A MAN of natural genius, great powers of reflection, a humane spirit, an understanding chiefly cultivated by self-education, though not unenlightened by knowledge of history, and especially of long and intimate experience of the habits, and occupations, and character of the poor, and we have a person before us, entitled to walk and talk even with Mr Wordsworth, and if so, before all the world.

[1] "Egyptian Thebes,
Tyre, by the margin of the sounding waves.
Palmyra, central in the desert, fell;
And the Arts died by which they had been raised."
The Excursion, book 8.

[2] "Once more to distant Ages of the world
Let us revert, and place before our thoughts
The face which rural Solitude might wear
To the unenlightened swains of pagan Greece.
—In that fair Clime, the lonely Herdsman, stretched
On the soft grass through half a summer's day,
With music lulled his indolent repose:
And, in some fit of weariness, if he,
When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear
A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds
Which his poor skill could make, his Fancy fetched
Even from the blazing Chariot of the Sun,
A beardless Youth, who touched a golden lute,
And filled the illumined groves with ravishment.
The nightly Hunter, lifting up his eyes
Towards the cresecnt Moon, with grateful heart
Called on the lovely wanderer who bestowed
That timely light, to share his joyous sport:

Tickler. My dear Shepherd, will you have the goodness to help me to wheel round yonder sofa-bed towards the right flank of the fire?

Shepherd. Surely, sir—but you're no gaun to sleep?

Tickler. Why, James, I waltzed from eleven last night till three this morning——

Shepherd. You what?

Tickler. Waltzed, and gallopaded, and mazourka'd.

Shepherd. The man's mad.

[TICKLER *lies down on the sofa-bed, and the* SHEPHERD *covers him cosily with cloaks.*

Tickler. Pastor Fido!

Shepherd. I wunner what Procrusty would hae thocht o' you, sir?—Noo, dinna snore nane. Though I snore mysel, I canna thole't in ithers—that's a gude callant—say your prayers—shut your een—and gang to sleep. Hushaby—hushaby—hushaby—hushaby! Remember me, sir, to a' your freens in the Land o' Nod—a strange shadowy set, an unaccountable generation—leevin unner laws that hae subsisted sin' the Fa', and enjoyin sic a perfeck system o' misrepresentation, that nae desire hae they o' Parliamentary Reform.

> And hence, a beaming Goddess with her Nymphs,
> Across the lawn and through the darksome grove
> (Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes
> By echo multiplied from rock or cave),
> Swept in the storm of chase, as Moon and Stars
> Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven,
> When winds are blowing strong. The Traveller slaked
> His thirst from Rill or gushing Fount, and thanked
> The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant Hills
> Gliding apace, with Shadows in their train,
> Might, with small help from fancy, be transformed
> Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.
> The Zephyrs, fanning, as they passed, their wings,
> Lacked not, for love, fair Objects, whom they wooed
> With gentle whisper. Withered Boughs grotesque,
> Stripped of their leaves and twigs by hoary age,
> From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth
> In the low vale, or on steep mountain side:
> And, sometimes, intermixed with stirring horns
> Of the live Deer or Goat's depending beard,—
> These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild brood
> Of gamesome Deities; or Pan himself,
> The simple Shepherd's awe-inspiring god."
>
> *The Excursion*, book 4.

Tickler (*indistinctly*)—

"A plague on both your houses."

Shepherd. His een's fast glazin—there's a bit snorie—and noo I think that may be safely ca'd sleep. (*Starting up*)—Mr North, haud ma hauns!

North. Hold your hands! What do you mean, James?

Shepherd. I was seized just then wi' a shudderin impetus to murder Mr Tickler—and had there been a knife on the table, I do devootly believe I would hae nicked his craig.[1]

North (*taking his crutch from its corner*). I cannot just exactly say, James, that I altogether like the expression in these eyes of yours at present. Burke indeed is dead—but his accomplices are yet alive——

Shepherd. Oh, man! but you're easily frichtened—you're a great cooard——

North (*cautiously restoring the crutch to its corner, while he still eyes the Shepherd*). Well then—well—James.

Shepherd. Wheesht, sir—wheesht. Speak lown, and ring the bell saftly—for eisters, and we'll cheat Tickler out o' the brodd.

[*Enter the Establishment with the Oyster-board—the Council of Five Hundred.*

North. Now, my dear James, let us suck them up silently—not to disturb Timothy's dreams.

Shepherd. Excessive sappy!

North. Very.

Shepherd. Young though lusty—their beards are no grown yet—ay, here's ane wi' a pair o' whuskers——

North. The natural history of the oyster——

Shepherd. Oh, sir! but I'm fonder and fonder every day o' the study o' natural history.

North. You have Bewick, I know, James, at your finger-ends——

Shepherd. Na—you ken nae sic thing. I hae little or nae knowledge at my finger-ends, or my tongue-tip either—it lies a' in my brain and in my heart. When, at times, the ideas come flashing out, my een are filled wi' fire—and when the emotions come flowin up, wi' water; at least in the ae case there's brichtness, and in the ither a haze. Aften the twa unite, like a cloud, veilin, but not hidin, the sun—like radiance on dew, showin it mair translucent ere it melt awa on the spring buds or the simmer flowers—an evanescence o'

[1] *Craig*—throat.

liquid lustre, out o' whase bosom the happy thochts flee awa to ither regions o' delicht, like bees obeyin their instincks, that lead them, without chart or compass, to every nook in the wilderness where blaws a family o' heather-bells.

North. I know you have the *Journal of a Naturalist*, published by Mr Murray—a delightful volume—perhaps the most so—nor less instructive than delightful—given to natural history since White's *Selborne*.[1]

Shepherd. You gied me't, and I never lend byucks you gied me—for to lend a byuck is to lose it—and borrowin's but a hypocritical pretence for stealin, and should be punished wi' death——

Tickler. Without benefit of clergy.

Shepherd. True, indeed, sir; a clergyman could be o' nae benefit to sic an unjustified sinner.

North. But there is another work, James, called *The British Naturalist*, published by Whittaker, Treacher, and Arnott, Ave-Maria Lane, which I must send out to you by the carrier——

Shepherd. What for no gie't to me the noo, and I'll put it in my pouch?

North. 'Tis not in the Snuggery. Indeed, at present, both volumes are with Mrs Gentle. The author is not only well versed in natural science, but he is a close observer of nature. He has a keen eye and a fine ear, and writes, not only with perspicuity, but, like almost all good naturalists, with eloquence. He views his subjects in those masses in which we find them grouped in nature; and the plant or the animal has been taken in conjunction with the scenery, and the general and particular use—and when that arose easily, the lesson of morality or natural religion.

Shepherd. A plan, I jalouse, at ance natural and feelosofical.

North. The woodcuts of the various animals and insects are designed and executed by Mr W. N. Brooke—and those of the lake and the brook by Mr Bonner, from drawings by Harry Wilson, Esq., who, by the way, has recently published some interesting *Views of Foreign Cities*.

Shepherd. What mean ye, sir, by the Lake and the Brook?

North. Why, the first volume of *The British Naturalist* con-

[1] The Rev. Gilbert White, author of the *Natural History of Selborne*, was born in 1720, and died in 1793.

sists of parts, entitled the Mountain, the Lake, the River, the Sea, the Moor, and the Brook.

Shepherd. Be sure to remember no to forget to keep it in your mind, sir, to attend to drappin a hint to Mrs Gentle, that ye hae promised to send out the twa volumns o' *The British Naturalist* to Altrive—and should they only be in boards, you had as weel get them bun', plainly but strongly, for wee Jamie's mad about a' crawlin, creepin, soomin, and fleein things, and I think o' gettin him made an Honorary Member o' the Wernerian Society.

North. I will send you out, at the same time, my dear James, *Menageries*, written, I am told, by my most amiable and ingenious philosophic friend, Charles Knight, Editor (?) of the *Library of Entertaining Knowledge.* The "Tower Menagerie," containing the natural history of the animals contained in that establishment, with anecdotes of their character and history——

Shepherd. That wull be a feast to my darling.

North. ——illustrated by portraits, taken from life, by that admirable artist, William Harvey, and engraved on wood by Branston and Wright, who stand in the first rank of their profession.

Shepherd. He'll wear his dear een out—God bless him—on the lions, teegers, and leopards—for though a lamb in gentleness o' disposition, the fiercer the animal, the deeper drauchts o' delight drinks his imagination frae the rings o' their een, and the spats on their hide, sae wildlike wi' the speerit o' the sandy deserts, yet mair beautifu' than ony tame creturs that walk peaceably aroun' the dwellins o' men.

North. The literary department has been superintended by E. T. Bennet, Esq., F.L.S., an active member of the Zoological Society—and much valuable assistance afforded by N. A. Vigors, the Secretary——

Shepherd. Erudite, I dout not, on a' manner o' monsters——

North. Zoologists, James, of the first order. To the same gentlemen we owe a similar work, equally beautiful—*The Gardens and Menagerie of the Zoological Society*, Vol. I., "Quadrupeds"——

Shepherd. Pit it intil the parshel. But dinna tak the trouble o' payin the carriage—for I'll no grudge it, nor a couple o' caulkers to the carrier, wha's a steady man, and never sleeps in his cart, nor, when she's heavily laden, even up-hill, loups

on to ease himsel on the tram—a dangerous practice, that has made many an honest woman a widow, and many weans orphans.

North. Your head, my dear James, is now touching Howitt's *Book of the Seasons.* Prig and pocket it. 'Tis a jewel.

[*The* SHEPHERD *seizes it from the shelf, and acts as per order.*

Shepherd. Is Nottingham far intil England, sir? For I would really like to pay the Hooitts a visit this simmer. Thae Quakers are, what ane micht scarcely opine frae first principles, a maist poetical Christian seck. There was Scott o' Amwell,[1] wha wrote some simplish things in a preservin speerit o' earnestness;—there is Wilkinson,[2] yonner, wha wons on a beautifu' banked river, no far aff Peerith (is't the Eamont, think ye?) the owther o' no a few pomes[3] delichtfu' in their domesticity—auld bachelor though he be—nae warld-sick hermit, but an enlichtened labourer o' love, baith in the kitchen and flower garden o' natur;—lang by letter has me and Bernard Barton[4] been acquent, and verily he is ane o' the mildest and modestest o' the Muses' sons, nor wanting a thochtfu' genie, that aften gies birth to verses that treasure themselves in folk's hearts;—the best scholar amang a' the Quakers is Friend Wiffen,[5] a capital translator, Sir Walter tells me, o' poets wi' foreign tongues, sic as Tawso, and wi' an original vein too, sir, which has produced, as I opine, some verra pure ore;—and feenally, the Hooitts, the three Hooitts,—na, there may be mair o' them for aught I ken, but I'se answer for William and Mary, husband and wife,[6] and oh! but they're weel met; and eke for Richard, (can he be their brither?) and wha's this was tellin me about anither brither o' Wullie's, a Dr Godfrey Hooitt, ane o' the best botanists in a' England, and a desperate beetle-hunter?

North. Entomologist, James. A man of science.

Shepherd. The twa married Hooitts I love just excessively, sir. What they write canna fail o' bein' poetry, even the maist

[1] Scott of Amwell, the author of *Amwell* and other poems; born in 1739, died in 1783.

[2] Wordsworth has sung the praises of this gentleman's spade, in the verses beginning, "Spade! with which Wilkinson hath tilled his lands."

[3] *Pomes*—poems.

[4] Bernard Barton, a friend of Charles Lamb; born 1784, died 1849.

[5] J. H. Wiffen; born 1792, died 1836.

[6] Since this was written, Mr and Mrs Howitt have adorned our literature with many agreeable contributions.

middlin o't, for it's aye wi' them the ebullition o' their ain feeling, and their ain fancy, and whenever that's the case, a bonny word or twa will drap itsel intil ilka stanzy, and a sweet stanzy or twa intil ilka pome, and sae they touch, and sae they sune win a body's heart; and frae readin their byuckies ane wushes to ken theirsels, and indeed do ken theirsels, for their personal characters are revealed in their volumms, and methinks I see Wully and Mary——

North. Strolling quietly at eve or morn by the silver Trent——

Shepherd. No sae silver, sir, surely, as the Tweed?

North. One of the sincerest streams in all England, James.

Shepherd. Sincere as an English sowl that caresna wha looks intil't, and flows bauldly alang whether reflectin cluds or sunshine.

North. Richard, too, has a true poetical feeling, and no small poetical power. His unpretending volume of verses well deserves a place in the library along with those of his enlightened relatives—for he loves nature truly as they do, and nature has returned his affection.

Shepherd. But what's this *Byuck o' the Seasons?*

North. In it the Howitts have wished to present us with all their poetic and picturesque features—a Calendar of Nature, comprehensive and complete in itself—which, on being taken up by the lover of nature at the opening of each month, should lay before him in prospect all the objects and appearances which the month would present, in the garden, in the field, and the waters—yet confining itself solely to those objects. Such, in their own words, is said to be their aim.

Shepherd. And nae insignificant aim either, sir. Hae they hit it?

North. They have. The scenery they describe is the scenery they have seen.

Shepherd. That circling Nottingham.

North. Just so, James. Their pictures are all English.

Shepherd. They show their sense in stickin to their native land—for unless the heart has brooded, and the een brooded too, on a' the aspecks o' the outer warld till the edge o' ilka familiar leaf recalls the name o' the flower, shrub, or tree frae which it has been blawn by the wund, or drapped in the

cawm, the poet's haun 'ill waver, and his picture be but a haze. In a' our warks, baith great an' sma', let us be national; an' thus the true speerit o' ae kintra 'ill be breathed intil anither, an' the haill warld encompassed an' pervaded wi' poetry and love.

North. As a proof, James, of their devotedness to merry England——

Shepherd. No a whit less merry that it contains a gude mony Quakers.

North. ——our Friends have described the year, without once alluding—as far as I have observed—to the existence of Thomson.

Shepherd. Na—that is queer an' comical aneuch;—nor can I just a'thegither appruve o' that forgetfulness, ignorance, or omission.

North. It shows their sincerity. They quote, indeed, scarcely any poetry but Wordsworth's—for in it, above all other, their quiet, and contemplative, and meditative spirits seem to repose in delight.

Shepherd. I canna understaun' why it should be sae, but wi' the exception o' yoursel, sir, I never kent man or woman wha loved and admired Wordsworth up to the pitch, or near till't, o' idolatrous worship, wha seemed to care a doit for ony ither poet, leevin or dead. He's a sectawrian, you see, sir, in the religion o' natur——

North. Her High Priest.

Shepherd. Weel—weel—sir; e'en be't sae. But is that ony reason why a' ither priests should be despised or disregarded, when tryin in a religious speerit to expound or illustrate the same byuck—the byuck o' natur which God has given us, wi' the haly leaves lyin open, sae that he wha rins may read, though it's only them that walks slowly, or sits down aneath the shadow o' a rock or a tree, that can understaun' sufficient to privilege them to breathe forth their knowledge an' their feelings in poetry, which is aye as a prayer or a thanksgiving?

North. The *Book of the Seasons* is a delightful book — and I recommend it to all lovers of nature.

(*Enter the Household on their stocking-soles, and remove the relics of the Feast of Shells.*)

Shepherd. Noo, we may wauken Tickler. He whuspered

intil my lug, as I was makin him cosy wi' the cloaks, no to let him sleep ayont eleven.

[*The* SHEPHERD "*blows mimic hootings to the silent owl,*" *who, opening his large eyes, cries* "*toowhit toowhoo!*" *and sits up on his perch.*

Tickler. Let us have oysters.

Shepherd. Eisters! The eisters 'ill no be ready, sir, for an hour yet. For my ain pairt, I'm no hungry the nicht—and dinna think I'll eat ony eisters. Mr North, will you?

North. No.

Shepherd. Dinna fash wi' eisters the nicht, Mr Tickler—for this has been a stormy day, and they're no caller. Was ye dreamin, sir? For you seemed unco restless.

Tickler. I was, James.

Shepherd. What o'?

Tickler. A Battle of Cats.

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon the slates!"

Miss Tabitha having made an assignation with Tom Tortoise-shell, the feline phenomenon, they two sit curmurring, forgetful of mice and milk, of all but love! How meekly mews the Demure, relapsing into that sweet under-song—the Purr! And how curls Tom's whiskers like those of a Pashaw! The point of his tail—and the point only is alive—insidiously turning itself, with serpent-like seduction, towards that of Tabitha, pensive as a Nun. His eyes are rubies, hers emeralds—as they should be—his lightning, hers lustre—for in her sight he is the lord, and in his, she is the lady of Creation.

North.—

"O happy love!—where love like this is found!
O heartfelt raptures!—bliss beyond compare!
I've paced much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare—
If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale"—

Shepherd. The last line wunna[1] answer—

"Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale!"

Tickler. Woman or cat—she who hesitates is lost. But Diana, shining in heaven, the goddess of the Silver Bow, sees

[1] *Wunna*—will not.

the peril of poor Pussy—and interposes her celestial aid to save the vestal. An enormous grimalkin, almost a wild cat, comes rattling along the roof, down from the chimney-top, and Tom Tortoiseshell, leaping from love to war, tackles to the Red Rover in single combat. Sniff—snuff—splutter—squeak—squall—caterwaul, and throttle!

North. Where are the following lines?

"From the soft music of the spinning purr,
When no stiff hair disturbs the glossy fur,
The whining wail, so piteous and so faint,
When through the house Puss moves with long complaint,
To that unearthly throttling caterwaul,
When feline legions storm the midnight wall,
And chant, with short snuff and alternate hiss,
The dismal song of hymeneal bliss"——

Shepherd. Wheesht, North—wheesht.

Tickler. Over the eaves sweeps the hairy hurricane. Two cats in one—like a prodigious monster with eight legs and a brace of heads and tails—and through among the lines on which clothes are hanging in the back-green, and which break the fall, the dual number plays squelch on the miry herbage.

Shepherd. A pictur o' a back-green in fowre words. I see it and them.

Tickler. The four-story fall has given them fresh fury and more fiery life. What tails! Each as thick as my arm, and rustling with electricity like the northern streamers. The Red Rover is generally uppermost—but not always—for Tom has him by the jugular like a very bulldog—and his small, sharp, tiger-teeth, entangled in the fur, pierce deeper and deeper into the flesh—while Tommy keeps tearing away at his rival, as if he would eat his way into his windpipe. Heavier than Tom Tortoiseshell is the Red Rover by a good many pounds; but what is weight to elasticity—what is body to soul? In the long tussle, the hero ever vanquishes the ruffian—as the Cock of the North the Gander.

North (bowing). Proceed.

Tickler. Cats' heads are seen peering over the tops of walls, and then their lengthening bodies, running crouchingly along the copestones, with pricked-up ears and glaring eyes, all attracted towards one common centre—the back-green of the inextinguishable battle. Some dropping, and some leaping

down, from all altitudes, lo! a general *mêlée!* For Tabitha, having through a skylight forced her way down stairs, and out of the kitchen-window into the back-area, is sitting pensively on the steps,

"And like another Helen fires another Troy."

Detachments come wheeling into the field of battle from all imaginable and unimaginable quarters—and you now see before you all the cats in Edinburgh, Stockbridge, and the suburbs, about as many, I should suppose, as the proposed constituents of our next city member.

Shepherd. The Town Council are naething to them in nummers. The back-green's absolutely composed o' cats.

Tickler. Up fly a thousand windows from ground-flat to attic, and what an exhibition of nightcaps! Here elderly gentlemen, apparently in their shirts, with head night-gear from Kilmarnock, worthy of Tappytoorie's self—behind them their wives—grandmothers at the least—poking their white faces, like those of sheeted corpses, over the shoulders of the fathers of their numerous progeny—there, chariest maids, prodigal enough to unveil their beauties to the moon, yet, in their alarm, folding the frills of their chemises across their bosoms—and lo! yonder the Captain of the Six Feet Club, with his gigantic shadow frightening that pretty damsel back to her couch, and till morning haunting her troubled dreams! "Fire! Fire!" "Murder! Murder!" is the cry—and there is wrath and wonderment at the absence of the police-officers and engines. A most multitudinous murder is in process of perpetration there—but as yet fire is there none; when lo! and hark! the flash and peal of musketry—and then the music of the singing slugs slaughtering the Catti, while bouncing up into the air, with Tommy Tortoise clinging to his carcass, the Red Rover yowls wolfishly to the moon, and then descending like lead into the stone-area, gives up his nine-ghosts, never to chew cheese more, and dead as a herring. In mid-air the Phenomenon had let go his hold, and seeing it in vain to oppose the yeomanry, pursues Tabitha, the innocent cause of all this woe, into the coal-cellar, and there, like Paris and Helen,

"When first entranced in Cranae's Isle they lay,
Lip pressed to lip, and breathed their souls away,"

entitled but not tempted to look at a king, the peerless pair begin to pur and play in that subterranean paradise, forgetful of the pile of cat-corpses that in that catastrophe was heaped half-way up the currant-bushes on the walls, so indiscriminate had been the Strages. All undreamed of by them the beauty of the rounded moon, now hanging over the city, once more steeped in stillness and in sleep!

Shepherd. Capital! Talkin' o' cats reminds ane o' mice—and mice reminds ane o' toasted cheese. Suppose, Mr Tickler, we hae a Tin-Trencher?

Tickler. A Welsh rabbit? Ring the bell.

(*Enter* Sir David Gam *and* Tappytoorie *with Welsh rabbits.*)

Shepherd. Noo, sirs, indulge me, if you please, wi' some feelosofical conversation.

Tickler. Moral or physical?

Shepherd. Let me consider. Fizzical.

North. Nay, nay, James—remember there are three of us —and that it is share and share alike,—remember, too, that Tickler had no oys——

Shepherd. Wheesht!

Tickler. Physical philosophy, gentlemen, is the most rigorous investigation of truth that the human mind has ever pursued. More than history—more than the legal examination of evidence—more than moral and metaphysical philosophy—more than religion. In it the matter of inquiry is more under command, the spirit of inquiry more just and sincere. It would seem that the discipline of truth which the human mind has undergone in its last hundred, one hundred and fifty, two hundred years—since Lord Bacon—of physical study, is the greatest, truest, most effectually fruitful that it has ever proved. Do we not feel the effects in the study of moral science, of history, philosophy? Do we not look now upon them with the purged eyes of Baconian pupils, with habits of thought, lights of examination, canons of judgment, a criticism of truth learnt in the school of physical philosophy? Do we not require other evidence, judge with another sobriety, look for another solidity in knowledge than we did? There were bolder, greater, more capable thinkers, not a stricter rule of thought. The great intellectual feature of the last age has been its success in physical science; not merely

among the leaders, but among the multitude, so that every one could contribute, and has done. Let us say this is not the end, but a step. Now it is time that the higher thinkers take another step. They do in Germany. The next step is, that they cease to view man's physical as his greatest conquests, and recognise, as they used to do, a mightier field.

North. Yes. Let them become again moralists, not physicians.

Shepherd. Ay—let them become again moralists, no physicians.—A savouryer Welsh rabbit I never pree'd.

Tickler. The character of the physical philosophy of the last century is, that it is without hypotheses (comparatively) —a kingdom of facts. Let moral philosophy be so. But first let us recognise the field, its extent, might, fruitfulness;— that it is not less than the physical—that it has been lost sight of—that it must be seen after again;—and this understood, things will resume their natural proportionate place. And now a change commences, which see. Physical philosophy having exerted its own rectifying, strengthening influence on the higher order of minds, will begin to leave them, to give way to more needed science, and to decline to an under rank of minds—and shall, according to a wonted and known law of society, pass gradually down to the lowest, producing in each rank as it descends, by its temporary activity, a salutary permanent influence—till it reaches the bottom, and at last gives way even from the lowest rank. But it will not, in truth, give way from and leave any rank; but from predominant will become subordinate, and take its due proportioned place in each.

North. I suppose, then, that we may bestir ourselves to advance the moral studies of the higher, and need not so much guide the intellectual of the lower.

Tickler. But meanwhile, Mr North, the moral studies of the lower classes ought to be wholly involved in religion—as the moral studies of the higher may be safely enough distinct from it, without forgetting it.

Shepherd. Eh?

North. What is physical study? Consider the difference in the knowledge of the world since the Greek thought the sun a chariot, and the earth a flat circle or oblong, with Hyperboreans, Cyclops, Acephali, &c., a south uninhabited

from heat, &c., as in Herodotus, with Ælian's natural history, &c., and its present state—geographical voyages, &c.

Shepherd. Et cetera.

Tickler. That was a dream of the world—this is knowledge.[1] That was the age of imagination—this of understanding or reason, or an approach to it. What is the good of physical knowledge? Many. One is, that it helps to make man feel strong in his powers: justly. Reading the universe rightly, he is exalted by understanding in it the wisdom that made it. It is one case of "magnanimous to correspond with heaven." Farther, he feels, by his power both to understand and to control nature, how much his destiny is given into his own hands. He is excited similarly to search government, education, happiness—to investigate the internal world, and endeavour to control and mould it. Only, he must not think himself higher, or more self-dependent, than he is. But to know fully the true extent of his powers, is the way not to think falsely, or have an interest in doing so. His intellectual dominion is now so great, that it may satisfy his ambition; and he may be content to know where it stops, where he becomes finite and dependent. If he is ennobled by his just contemplation

[1] The following passage is an eloquent commentary on Tickler's text. "If the Pagan theology had not retired before the irresistible power of Christianity—which it did, however, slowly, and with manifest reluctance, and after having existed for a time, in its spirit at least, under new forms assumed from the old religion—it must have surrendered, with all its gods and goddesses, at the approach of modern science. Astronomy alone would have sufficed for its overthrow. The material universe which this science discloses, requires other and greater gods; and a race of divinities who sojourned on this earth, who haunted its shady recesses, and tenanted its lofty mountains, must have ceased to be the objects of worship when surrounded by that enlarged and magnificent scene of creation, which is now familiar to the minds, almost to the senses, of all men. The gods of Paganism could not have occupied this new creation: there is no place for them in the universe, according to Newton.

"It is worth while to observe that science, by transforming the very habitation in which we dwell, has rendered impossible that play of fancy, that anthropomorphism, which in the old world was so predominant. What we have of this kind is traditional, not native to our times. To us, in whom the first deceptive impression of the senses has been corrected, almost as soon as we could think, by knowledge it cost ages to acquire, and other ages to extend and circulate—to us it is a curious and distinct effort of the imagination to conceive what manner of world this was to its earlier inhabitants. They lived, at least the multitude, and the multitude are in this matter everything, in a very straitened, circumscribed creation—a flat and stationary earth, arched over by the sky as by its natural roof. In this miniature of nature the human form was great. A god was invested in it without thought of violation of his dignity,

of the structure and design of the universe, shall not the whole race participate in his ennobling? Shall not the common man be raised by it—by knowing the results, without the process of deduction, without the science? Thus, I can well suppose that mechanics' lectures on Geography, Natural History, Astronomy, and some other branches, scientifically true in all their matter, but popular in their exposition—that is, made intelligible to a very moderately constructed understanding, and affecting to the imagination and feelings, might be very interesting and very useful indeed; therefore, let Dr Birkbeck,[1] spite of his politics, which are bad, flourish, and all Institutions.

Shepherd. That's leeberal and illeeberable in ae breath. Never heard I mortal man sae voluble during a Welsh rabbit.

North. Listen to me, gentlemen.

Shepherd. Listen to you, sir—what else hae we been doin—and I fear to little purpose—a' this lang interminable nicht?

North. The spirit which draws men individually towards knowledge, is not the same which invests it with reverence to the eyes of the world. The sages of rude times have been held in mysterious veneration; and their wisdom has been thought to proceed from beings of a higher nature, or even to command them. Imagination, ever seeking Deity, apprehends its presence not only in the powers that move in the natural

and men assigned him for habitation a region just beyond the clouds, or else the waste and inaccessible places of their own world, the air, and the ocean, and tops of mountains, and caverns in the rock. The humanised divinity had a fit location, and could be supported in the imagination without much incongruity. But what if such forms had continued to exist till science had worked her great transformation? When astronomy had dislodged the rounded world from its rest at the centre of all things, and sent it to revolve on its wide circuit, one only of a multitude of similar and far-scattered globes—when that arch which so securely overbuilt it had expanded into a limitless vacancy, and left the earth diminished and alone, and far from the gates of heaven—what place, what function would have remained for the astonished gods of Olympus? Had they survived till our day of science, they must then have vanished like a dream. The popular imagination is gone for ever that conducted the chariot-wheel of god or goddess over the blue firmament; there is no road for the horses of the sun; earth and heaven are no longer neighbour territories; and the clouds in our atmosphere can never again give support to ethereal messenger journeying to and from the celestial confines. The world is disenchanted for the abode of these fairy gods—the high mountain has sunk from its imposing, because heaven-reaching, altitude—the throne of Jupiter is reversed for ever."—*A Discourse on Ethics of the School of Paley.* By WILLIAM SMITH, Esq. Barrister-at-law. 1839.

[1] Dr George Birkbeck, the founder of Mechanics' Institutions, born in 1776, died in 1841.

world, but in human power, when much surpassing all that appears within the range of familiar knowledge. Thus it makes prophets, enchanters, and the favoured that have intercourse with spirits.

Shepherd. Michael Scott,[1] in the olden day. But times are changed, sir; and even Christopher North himsel, is by few reckoned a magician.

North. But this reverence for knowledge is imaginative and generous, and of the same birth with the love of knowledge, which is itself an inquisition after Deity. But in those times of ours, when Imagination is almost expelled from the processes and counsels of human life, what then makes worship around knowledge? Truly, she that worshippeth Power. She that liveth in the eyes of men, and is ruled under their influences as her stars.

Shepherd. What's her name?

North. She sees that knowledge is great and strong in the world—that it commands power and fame; that it gets wealth; that it sways even in the great motions of the world; that it is set in honour, in places of old authority—therefore it is for her reverence—therefore she will set her children to learn it—therefore she will give it her favour and her help, and will to some degree bow herself before it.

Tickler. Yes, North, that principle will govern even opinion of knowledge, among every society, wherever great causes act to produce a general contention of spirit for it beyond the pure love of it for its own sake. Or, to make clear sense at once, what are the principles that excite labour after knowledge, besides the pure delight in it?

North. There are two great original powers, Tickler, that drive onwards the human spirit in quest of knowledge; the necessity of life, and the delight of the soul. From the rudest to the most civilised state of society, the acquisition of knowledge that arises to men, from their contention with nature, to make her yield them life, is very great—immense. Suppose in our own country, James, one mind to possess all the knowledge by which, in ten thousand thousand hands, bread is earned.

Shepherd. What a Solomon he would be—a leevin Library o' Usefu' and Entertainin Knowledge.

North. Setting aside, for a moment, the multiform applica-

[1] Michael Scott, the wizard in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, flourished in the thirteenth century.

tion of simple principles by which the instruments of human art are produced—heavens! only think on the knowledge of Nature, James, which in every minute division is distributed throughout those various arts!

Shepherd. The thocht's overwhelmin.

North. Suppose that all the facts as to the nature and properties of the different substances which are employed as materials or agents in various arts in Birmingham and Sheffield, were known to one mind, as they are known to those who without higher knowledge practise them for their bread! Suppose an intelligent mind to possess the knowledge only which it might acquire in a course of workshops, from the conversation of those who worked in them—would it not, without study, without books—be most extensive—most——

Shepherd. The knowledge o' many a' gathered thegither in ae master-mind—yet aiblins withouten seecance.

North. But if you will look at those forms of life in which *each man*, James, is required to possess the whole of that knowledge of nature, which is necessary for obtaining from her the greater part of the means of his subsistence——

Shepherd. Amna I sic a man mysel, sir?

North. You are, my dear James. Think, Tickler, how any man, who is much acquainted with labouring people, where they are generally neither depressed by poverty nor degraded by vicious habits prevailing among them, must have been surprised at times to find the extent of knowledge, which native intelligence, exerting itself upon those objects and facts which the plain necessities of life only made important, had amassed — without books,—husbandmen — shepherds —mechanics—artificers!

Shepherd. Pour out upon him, Tickler—deluge him, Timothy.

Tickler. If you would see the most extensive acquisition of knowledge enforced by the necessities of life, you must know what is the life of a savage, in those tribes where there is full power of mind—for in some the mind is extraordinarily degraded. For example, many of the tribes of the North American Indians, before they were visited with the curse of an intercourse with the Europeans, possessed a high character of mind, both for heroic and intellectual qualities. Now, conceive one of these Indians cast amidst the boundlessness of nature—with a mind strong and ardent—not beginning life as we do—surrounded with a thousand helps to guard it from

all sufferings and necessities, to spare it all use of its faculties—but cast upon the bosom of nature—to win from her the means of the preservation of his existence. From the moment he begins to understand and know—he sees what the course of his life is to be. He is to be a hunter and an inhabitant of the woods. Now, imagine all the multitude of natural facts, on the knowledge of which, for safety and sustenance, his mind is made to rest. He is a hunter—that is to say, that from the day he can use his hands at his will, he will begin his warfare against the animal race. What does that mean? That of every bird and animal of which his power can compass the destruction, he must begin to know the signs, the haunts, and the ways. He is already engaged as an observer in natural history. You may be sure he has very soon as exact a knowledge of the figure, colours, cries, &c., of many of them, and of the place and construction of the habitations of those which find, or make themselves habitations—of their young, or eggs —their number, their seasons, and precautions of breeding, &c., as any naturalist from Linnæus to Cuvier. Now, everything he has to do to ensnare, entice, waylay them, is drawn entirely from observation of the various particulars of their modes of life. This knowledge, as he grows, he goes on extending to numbers of the birds and animals that people his dominion,— and when the savage has, by keen and extensive observation (you have read Hearne, North?) acquired all the knowledge that affects his own well-being—of the appearance, the nature, the seasons, the modes of life of as many of these creatures as will come under the necessity or the wantonness of his art as a hunter, I ask, is it not plain that he must possess, very intimately and exactly, much of that knowledge which, when possessed by a naturalist, is raised to the rank of science?

Shepherd. Ask Audubon.

Tickler. Combine with this the knowledge of the natural world that surrounds him, as implied by his dependence for sustenance on its vegetable productions — and all the various knowledge of the earth itself, and of the skies, which become important to him who is to make his way by recollection or conjecture through untracked wildernesses, forests, swamps, and precipices. How, in an unknown wilderness so made up, even after he has chosen his course, by the stars, shall he know to trace a path through the dangers and immensity of nature, which human feet may tread? By observing, studying

all his life long the nature of mountains, torrents, marshes, vegetation. Then add to this—his observation of the air and the skies, from his dependence on their changes, and I think, my lads, if you have imagination to represent to yourselves one-twentieth part of the knowledge which a savage will thus be driven to possess by his mere physical necessities, you will be astonished to find how much liker a learned man he is than you be.

Shepherd. Maist yeloquent!

Tickler. Will this seem fanciful? I will give you a single instance. There is scarcely one point in natural history more celebrated and interesting than the beaver's building his house. Do you wish to be correctly informed upon this subject? Read all our naturalists from Buffon downwards, and you will be incorrectly instructed on the mind of these mysterious animals. Then go and read the account given by a man who had nothing to do with beavers, except that he was an agent in the fur trade, and who tells you what the Indian hunters told and showed him, and you will find much the most interesting, and the only exact account we possess of these builders.

Shepherd. Wha?

North. It is in Hearne's Travels in the northern parts of America.[1] Here then I establish that a great part of that knowledge of external living nature which we hoard up among our treasures of science, is, through necessity, possessed, and I will say—much more accurately—by men in those rude forms of life, in which they are perpetually contending with nature for the supply of all our wants.

[*Silver Timepiece chimes Twelve, and enter the Six Supper-supporters, with Roasted Turkey, Lamb, Fillet of Veal, Salmon, Turbot, Cod, &c. &c. &c.*

Shepherd. I canna charge my memory wi' ever havin been sae lang afore without breakin my fast. It's bad for the health sittin hour after hour on an empty stamack, mair especially when the mind as weel's the body's exhowsted wi' the wear and tear o' rational and irrational conversation. Tickler, tackle you to the turkey—North, lay yoursel out on the lamb—and as for me, I shall hae some flirtation wi' the fillet.

[1] "Samuel Hearne was employed by the Hudson Bay Company from 1769 to 1792, to explore the north-west coast of America, and was the first European who succeeded in reaching the Arctic Ocean."—*American Editor.*

North. Make ready!

Tickler. Present!

Shepherd. Fire!

[*A sort of snuzzling silence in the Snuggery for an hour or thereabouts. Timepiece smites One, and the Apparition of* PICARDY *and his Tail comes and goes like the rainbow.*

North. THE KING (*with all the honours*).

Tickler. Of whom recording history will say—"not that he found London of brick and left it of marble — but that he found his people in bondage, and left them free!"

North. Base Helot who first voided, and baser Helot still who ate up that loathsome lie, and splattered it out again undigested in his own poisonous slaver!

Tickler. Pitiful and paltry press!

North. Most wretched in its street-walking prostitution!

Tickler.—

"O tyrant swollen with insolence and pride!"

North.—

"Thou dog in forehead—but in heart a deer!"

Shepherd. Is there to be a revolution, sirs?

North. If there be, 'twill be a bloody one.

Tickler. Come—come—gents—let us talk over that matter at next Noctes.

Shepherd. The verra first thing the Radicals will do—will be to extinguish the Noctes Ambrosianæ.

North. The verra last they shall be alloo'd to do—James —*Ecce Signum!* [*Shoulders the Crutch.*

Tickler. Since you insist upon it, why then I will sing a new song—in the character of a Radical!

THE JACOBIN BILL.[1]

TUNE—"*Nottingham Ale.*"

I.

Now the reign of the tyrant for ever is past,
And the day-star of freedom is beaming on high—
When truth is now heard in the Senate at last,
And the shout of the million in grateful reply—
Let us sing and rejoice,
With heart and with voice,

[1] The Reform Bill, the first reading of which was proposed by Lord John Russell on March 1, 1831.

And each man his bumper triumphantly fill—
For in this Age of Reason,
We know of no treason,
But refusing to drink to the Jacobin Bill!

II.

For many a hopeless and heart-breaking day,
The conflict unequal we strove to maintain—
But still, as the slaves of "legitimate" sway,
We demanded redress—but demanded in vain—
Debased and degraded—
Our birthrights invaded—
We fruitlessly sought the great truth to instil,
That our ruthless oppressor,
The present possessor,
Must taste all the sweets of a Jacobin Bill!

III.

But the debt of the people, so long in arrear,
By the Jacobin Bill will be speedily paid,—
And the step of the peasant will press on the peer,
And prove of what metal his "order" is made—
With Hunt at the steerage,
We'll pitch the whole Peerage,
Like the Prophet of old, the vex'd waters to still,—
And many a martyr
Of star and of garter,
Must now read his fate in the Jacobin Bill!

IV.

And as for those righteous rulers in lawn,
Who pillage the poor with palaver of peace—
Those Shepherds, whose reverend minds are withdrawn
From the care of the flock, by the thoughts of the fleece,—
How odd the grimaces
Of many smug faces,
On finding they're nothing but tenants at will,
When first we shall dish up
Some rosy Archbishop,
Who voted, perhaps, for the Jacobin Bill!

V.

The lawyer no longer need bother his brain
With the quibbles and quirks of his straw-splitting trade,
For the Law of our Bill is abundantly plain,
And needs not a hired *mis*interpreter's aid:
And as for the Judges,
There's nobody grudges

To give them a touch of their friend the tread-mill,—
If 'twere but to show them
We feel what we owe them,
For days when none dreamt of a Jacobin Bill!

VI.

Thus peer, priest, and lawyer, each civilly sent
His bread in an honester calling to win,
And hearing no more of tithes, taxes, or rent,
The work of reform may be said to begin!
The great revolution
Of just distribution,
Its blessings unmeasured will thenceforth distil,
And cutting and carving,
For thousands now starving,
At once will be found in the Jacobin Bill!

VII.

The mechanic who toils for his shilling a-day,
May then get as drunk as the prince or the peer,—
And citizen Russell, and citizen Grey,
Will see the true use of their thousands a-year;
In Whig and in Tory-house,
Happy and glorious,
Day after day the parched people may swill—
And how pleasant to revel
On "the fat Bedford level,"
For love of our friend of the Jacobin Bill!

VIII.

O England, the land of the tyrant and slave!
How happily changed will thy destinies be,
When the harlequin banner shall gallantly wave
O'er the patriot deeds of the brave and the free!
With streets barricaded,
And pikemen paraded,
What generous ardour each bosom will thrill,
When in civil defiance
Of martial science,
We stand in defence of the Jacobin Bill!

IX.

And when every man's hand is at every man's throat—
Oh! then what a pleasant Parisian scene!
With our own *ça ira*, and our own *sans culottes*,
And perhaps, Heaven bless us! our own *guillotine*.
We've been too slow in learning—
Too dull in discerning,

These radical cures for each deep-seated ill—
But truly our neighbour
Has not lost her labour,
When at length she has taught us our Jacobin Bill!

North. Thank ye, Tickler. You write and sing a song as well, if not better, than any man in Scotland.

Shepherd. It cuts to the quick.

North. There is one public man in England, Tickler, over whose apostasy from one sacred cause[1]—more in sorrow than in anger—I and thousands—yea millions—groaned. Yet from his eloquent lips lately fell words of warning wisdom; nor shall my praise of his patriotism be mingled at this moment with any unavailing lamentation or reproach—Sir Robert Peel. The conclusion of his admirable speech on Lord John Russell's motion for Reform in Parliament, has committed itself to my memory——

Tickler. Hear! hear! hear!

North. "We are arrived at 1831, and reform is again proposed, whilst the events of the last year in Paris and Brussels are bewildering the judgment of many, and provoking a restless, unquiet disposition, unfit for the calm consideration of such a question. I, too, refer to the condition of France, and I hold up the late revolution in France, not as an example, but as a warning to this country. Granted that the resistance to authority was just; but look at the effects—on the national prosperity, on industry, on individual happiness—even of just resistance. Let us never be tempted to resign the well-tempered freedom which we enjoy, in the ridiculous pursuit of the wild liberty which France has established. What avails that liberty which has neither justice nor wisdom for its companions—which neither brings peace nor prosperity in its train? It was the duty of the King's Government to abstain from agitating this question at such a period as the present—to abstain from the excitement throughout this land of that conflict—(God grant it may be only a moral conflict!)—which must arise between the possessors of existing privileges, and those to whom they are to be transferred. It was the duty of the Government to calm, not to stimulate, the fever of popular excitement. They have adopted a different course—they have

[1] That of Protestantism.

sent through the land the firebrand of agitation, and no one can now recall it. Let us hope that there are limits to their powers of mischief. They have, like the giant enemy of the Philistines, lighted three hundred brands, and scattered through the country discord and dismay; but God forbid that they should, like him, have the power to concentrate in death all the energies that belong to life, and to signalise their own destruction by bowing to the earth the pillars of that sacred edifice, which contains within its walls, according even to their own admission, 'the noblest society of freemen in the world.'"

Tickler. Much indeed might be forgiven in the past conduct of a statesman who has courage so to speak at such a crisis.

North. May Reform come from such a statesman as spoke in that pregnant passage, and the country will at once be satisfied and strengthened.

Tickler. Amen.

Shepherd. Ax your pardon, sir, for puttin rather an abrupt question; but does neither o' you twa smell onything out o' the common?

Tickler. I have no nose.

Shepherd. Nae nose? In that case, neither has an elephant.

Tickler. I mean no sense of smell.

Shepherd. Then I pity you, sir, in spring, up i' the mornin early, in the Forest, when the sun is sae tenderly wooin the dawn, and a shower o' bees is perpetually drappin doun frae the balmy bosom o' the south-west wind, on the balmy bosom o' the Earth, that is indeed flowin, as the Scriptur says, wi' milk and honey, and a' hotchin wi' dew-reekin sun-seekin flowers, as if through a' her open pores were breathin the irrepressible delight o' our great mother's heart.

North. How spiritual the scent of violets!

Shepherd (*snuffing and snoking*). Can it be Guse?

North. Poo, poo, James. 'Tis but "the strong imagination of a feast."

Shepherd. A feast? Fuilzie!

Tickler.—

> "So scented the Grim Feature, and upturned
> His nostril wide into the murky air,
> Sagacious of his quarry from so far."

Shepherd. That quotation's no pat, sir; I'm no smellin a dead horse in a far-awa quarry, but the memory o' a roasted Guse in this verra room. THE GLASGOW GANDER'S NO YET EXTINCK.

North. James, you are too metaphysical. The memory of a smell is a most abstract idea.

Tickler. I remember it in the Concrete.

Shepherd. It aften haunts me, sirs, at meals, till I lay doun the spoon wi' a scunner, and bock at the rumbledethumps.[1] The family canna sympatheese wi' me—for it's the same wi' the scent as wi' the sicht—twa folk never yet, at ae time, either smelt or saw a ghost—and it's even sae wi' the stink o' the Gander.

North. Peace to his manes!

Tickler. Methinks I see him moulting. "In my mind's eye, Horatio."

Shepherd. Moutin! Puir fallow! in the pens! The Gander's in a piteous condition then, sirs; a' ragged and raw, doup red-bare, as if nettle-stung, and the sprootin quullies blushin wi' bluid. Oh! but at that season he's sensitive—sensitive; and he drags alang his meeserable existence in ae dolefu' hiss — a fent and feeble hiss — less like an ordinar Gander's than a bat's——

Tickler. I know it—a mixture of a bat's, a cat's, and an adder's, which, in the darkness and silence of nature, would be not unalarming, did not your knowledge of ornithology come instantly to your aid, and scientifically refer it to the enormous moulter.

North. As Goldsmith pathetically says,

"To stop too fearful, and too faint to go!"

Shepherd. If you but pint your finger at him, then, "he gangs distracted mad"——

Tickler. And gives vent at all points to such a gabble, that you look up to the lift, James, expecting a cloud of wild-geese from Norway——

Shepherd. But the sky is calm——

North. And so would be the common, but for this picturesque Impersonation of pain, impertinence, and poltroonery——

[1] See vol. i. p. 57.

Tickler. Who

"Plays such fantastic tricks beneath high heaven
As make the angels weep."

Shepherd. What an eemage! An angel weepin at a guse! That's no orthodox. It would be ayont the power o' the angel Gabriel himsel, or Michael, or Raphael either, ony mair than us Three, to gaze doun on the Gander without fa'in intil guffaws.

North. In Lincolnshire — in the Fens — these unfortunate animals are plucked perennially in cavies——

Shepherd. What? A' the year through!

North. Ay, James, all the year through—from June to January—and from January to June.

Shepherd. Without bein' alloo'd ae single holiday, sir? I couldna carry on sic a system o' persecution as that again' ony Guse or Gander that ever gabbled—for it borders on inhumanity; and sometimes, methinks, about the close o' the month, as I was haudin the noiseless tenor o' my way towards his cavie, to gie him his accustomed plookin, my heart would relent, seein the pimples and pustules pabblin a' ower him, just as parritch pabbles in the pat — the countless holes, sir, out o' which the quulls had been rugged — and then, in place o' administerin the usual discipline to his doup, or what, wi' his tale, he thinks wings, ten to ane I would gie him a handfu' o' corn, mixed wi' cauld potawtoes, say something kind and consolin to the *sans-culottes* citizen o' the cavie, and aiblins openin the door, let him out to tak a waddle on thae absurd splay-feet o' his, beneath whose soles you canna, however, help pityin the poor grass, and heavin a sigh for the inevitable bruisin o' much beetle.

North. I am not—either by nature or education—superstitious; yet I cannot help attaching some credit to the strange rumour——

Shepherd. What strange rumour? Let me hear't, sir; for there's naething I like sae weel's a strange rumour.

North. Why, that the great Glasgow Gander has been seen since the last Noctes.

Shepherd. Whaur?

North. At divers times and in sundry places.

Shepherd. But no in the flesh, sir—no in the flesh.

Tickler. The Ghost of the Gander!!!

North.—

"Doom'd for a certain time to walk the night,
And, for the day, confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in his days of nature,
Are burnt and purged away."

Tickler.—

"But that it is forbid
To tell the secrets of his prison-house,
He could a tale unfold."

North. That "eternal blazon," Tickler, must be reserved for another Noctes. A description of his Purgatory by the Ghost of the Glasgow Gander will eclipse Dante's.

Shepherd. Wha saw't?

North. People in general.

Shepherd. Ay, that's the way wi' a' supernatural apparitions. I defy you to trace ony ane amang the best accredited o' them a' up to its first gloom or glimmer afore individual een—but it's neither the less true nor the less fearsome on that account—and that you'll alloo even to your ain loupin heart, the first time you forgather wi' a ghaist—in a wood, or on a muir, or glowerin out upon you frae the embrasure o' an auld castle, or risin up as silent as the mist, in the verra heart o' the thunner o' some lanesome waterfa'.

North. Some, 'tis said, have seen it, as if escaped from the spit—trussed, yet endowed with locomotive power——

Tickler. Hissing like a steam-engine.

North. Others, gashed with a thousand wounds, and dripping with gore and gravy——

Tickler.—

"In somnos ecce! ante oculos mæstissimus ANSER,
Visus adesse mihi, largosque effundere fletus!
Raptatus Tapitouro ut quondam, aterque cruento
Pulvere, perque pedes trajectus loro tumentes."

North.—

"Hei mihi! qualis erat! Quantum mutatus ab illo
ANSERE!"

Tickler.—

"O Lux Dardaniæ! Spes O Fidissima Teucrûm!
Quæ tantæ tenuere moræ? Quibus ANSER ab oris
Expectate venis?"

North.—

"Ut te, post multa tuorum
Funera——
Defessi adspicimus!"

Tickler.—

"Quæ caussa indigna serenos
Fœdavit voltus? aut cur hæc volnera cerno?"

North.—

"Ille nihil; nec me querentem vana, moratur,
Sed, graviter gemitus imo de pectore ducens"——

Tickler.—

"Heu! fuge, NATE DEA!"

Shepherd. What! Does the Ghost of the Gander gabble Greek?

Tickler. The story runs, James, that

"Even in his ashes lives his wonted fire,"

and that he has been seen by the watchman, as he "walks his lonely round," impotently pursuing, up and down the Gusedubs, some dingy Dulcinea desired of yore, who, with loud shrieks, shuns his embraces, and finally, in desperation, plunges for shelter in among a drove of ducks, merry in the moonlight on the Peat-Bog, into whose sullen depths is afraid to plunge the hot and hissing Tarquin, who bitterly knows that fat cannot float without feathers——

North. He sticks to Terra Firma—"larding the lean earth as he moves along."

Shepherd. What seems he noo in the een o' the Bubbly?

North. The Bubbly sees through him—and wages warfare on the Gander's Ghost. But you may imagine the Bubbly's astonishment on finding the Gander evaporate beneath his tread as he leaps upon him, after having chased him three times round Nelson's Pillar.[1]

Tickler. Methinks I see the Ghost of the Gander,

"At the close of the day, when the city is still,
And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove,"

waddling along that noble square, on the summit of Blythswood Hill,[1] and moralising to himself on the destinies of his species——

[1] In Glasgow.

Shepherd. Wushin, a' in vain, that they wad but tak a lesson frae his fate! A' in vain, sirs; for even let a spectre come frae the sewer to forewarn them o' their doom, yet wunna they keep their tongue within their bills, but wull keep gapin, and hissin, and gabblin on till the end o' the chapter, which, aiblins, consists o' sic a catastrophe at Awmbrose's, sir, as will be remembered to the latest posterity, and, translated intil a thousan' languages, be perused by all people that on earth do dwell, lang after the Anglo-Scotch, and the Scoto-English, have been baith dead tongues. Example's lost on a' Fules—feathered and unfeathered—and that's aye been an argument wi' me—excepp in cases o' verra rare culprits—again' capital punishments.

North. 'Tis said the Gawpus of the Ghost——

Shepherd. You mean the Ghost of the Gawpus——

North. ——has been seen in Edinburgh. The Black Cook of this establishment, James, is afraid to sleep by herself——

Shepherd. Canna she get Tappytoorie, or the Pech——

Tickler. Hush—hush—James.

North. You know all feathers are among her perquisites—and she told King Pepin, that, t'other night, on lifting up the lid of the chest where that golden fleece reposed, among the plumage of inferior fowls, lo, the Ghost of the Gander, spurred on by instinctive passion, abhorrent of his nudity, insanely struggling to replume himself——

Shepherd. Haw — haw — haw! — and hopping about in the chest, amaist as roomy as a Minister's Girnel,[1] like a chiel risin half-drunk in the mornin, and wha havin gotten ane o' his legs intil the breeks, fin's it a'thegither ayont his capacity to get in the ither, but keeps stoiterin and stacherin, and tumblin, outower the floor frae wa' to wa', for a lang while, dour on an impossible achievement, and feenally fa'in backarts on a sack, wi' nae mair howp o' maisterin his velveteens in this warld, than in the next o' insurin his salvation.

Tickler. O thou Visionary!

North. Poor soul! in her situation, such an adventure——

Shepherd. Her situation? You're no serious, sir?

North. Too true, James. In her fright she let fall the lid —nor has she since had courage, his majesty informs me, to uplift it.

[1] *Girnel*—a large chest for holding meal.

Tickler. The Ghost of the Gander will be smothered. He had better have kept in the sewer.

North. In future ages, James, generations of men seeing the Ghost of the Glasgow Gander, will vainly believe that in the nineteenth century all Ganders were of his size——

Shepherd. Ay—that there were giants in our days.

Tickler. He will cause great disturbance in Ornithology.

Shepherd. Amang the tribe Anseres. Compared wi' him, the geese o' the three thousandth 'ill dwinnle doun to dyucks.

North. In some future Demonology, the philosopher will endeavour to reduce him to ordinary dimensions, nay, even to prove him—all in vain—to be a mere phantom of the imagination.

Shepherd. Yet, sirs, mithers and nouriees wull hush the babbies on their breists wi' the cry o' "the Ganner!—the Ganner!" "gin you wunna lie quate, ye vile yaummeriu imp, I'll gie ye to the Ghost o' the great Glasgow Ganner!" Na—tunes 'ill be made to eemage forth his gabble, by the Webers o' unborn time—and Theatres be thick wi' folk, as trees wi' craws, to hear, on the hundredth nicht o' its performance, a maist unearthly piece o' music frae a multitudinous orchestra, ca'd the "Ganner's Chorus!"

Tickler. I am sorry he was slaughtered. He would have been an incomparable chimney-sweep.

Shepherd. To have admitted him, whatna flue!

Tickler. Come, North, cut the subject short with a song. Give us the Ghost of the Gander—a Tale of Terror—after the fashion of Mat Lewis. Poor Mat! he was a man of genius—now how forgotten!

North. I'm a little hoarse——

Shepherd. A little horse?

Tickler. That's always the affectation of you great singers.

North. Pray, Tickler, which, to your ear, is the more musical of the two, the gabble of a Gander, or the braying of a Jackass?

Shepherd. Dinna answer him, Mr Tickler, for he's only wushin to get aff the sang.

Tickler. 'Twould be bad, boorish manners, James, not to give an answer to a civil question. I prefer the Gander by sunrise from the sea—the Jackass, when that luminary is setting behind the mountains.

Shepherd. What luminary?

Tickler. Neither the Gander nor the Jackass, James, but the Sun. Elated by the glowing charms of the rosy morn, my soul delights in the gabble of geese on a common—but as I wander pensive at to-fall of the day, then, for love or money, your Jackass, with ears, legs, lungs, and jaws, all "stepping westwards," and enacting, in a solo, for his own enjoyment, the Vicar of Bray, worthy to be a Bishop.

Shepherd. What say ye to a Mule?

North. The young American, in his most amusing volumes, *A Year in Spain*,[1] has exhausted the subject.

Shepherd. What's your wull, sir?

North. "I hate a mule," quoth he, "most thoroughly, for there is something abortive in everything it does, even to its very bray. An ass, on the contrary, has something hearty and whole-souled about it. Jack begins his bray with a modest whistle, rising gradually to the top of his powers, like the progressive eloquence of a well-adjusted oration, and then as gradually declining to a natural conclusion; but the mule commences with a voice like thunder, and then, as if sorry for what he has done, he stops like a bully when throttled in the midst of a threat, or a clown who has begun a fine speech, and has not courage to finish it."

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw! That's capital, man.

North. As Alexander of Macedon said of old, that had he not been Alexander, he would have wished to be Diogenes, so, we may presume, had the hero of Glasgow not been a Gander, he would have chosen to be a——

Tickler. Mule or Jackass?

Shepherd. Ay—that is the question. Each——

North. Alternately——

Shepherd. Day about.

North. On Tuesday, beginning his bray with a modest whistle, and throughout his performance just such an original as the lively American has drawn the animated picture of—on Friday, like a bully throttled in the midst of a threat——

Tickler. And cudgeled along the Trongate——

North. Till his back was like the *Edinburgh Review*.

Tickler. The Blue and Yellow.

[1] *A Year in Spain*, which was successfully republished in England, was written by the late Alexander Slidell (afterwards Mackenzie) of the U. S. Navy—*American Editor.*

North. Or *Blackwood's Magazine.*
Tickler. A lively green.
Shepherd. Needing nae certificat.
Tickler. But no more nonsense. Now for your song.

(North—*clearing his pipes with a caulker—sings.*)

THE GHOST OF THE GANDER.

Oh! what is that figure, and what can it mean,
That comes forth in the stillness of night—
That near the Guse-dubs like a phantom is seen—
That haunts the Salt-market, the Gorbals, the Green,
And avoids the approach of the light?

'Tis the Ghost of the Gander—the unavenged Ghost—
The spirit disturbed and distressed
Of him who erewhile of his tribe was the boast,
Whom 'twas shocking to slay, and inhuman to roast,
The unfortunate Goose of the West!

We all must remember—we never can cease
To think of his proudest display,
When first in the grand competition of Geese,
He appeared like an over-fed Hero of Grease,
And triumphantly carried the day.

And oh! had he made but a different use
Of his triumph of shape and of size,
He still might have lived—a respectable Goose—
And the nettles might still have been proud to produce
The Gander that carried the prize!

But, flushed with his conquest, elated with fame,
And swoln with preposterous pride,
With gabble unheard-of in wild goose or tame,
The Gander in person and conduct became
The Pest of the Queen of the Clyde.

We do not insist on his manner and mien—
For these we might find an excuse—
But his gabble was gross, and his conduct obscene,
And he openly dwelt among creatures—unclean—
A shameless and scandalous Goose!

And, hating the blessings he never could share,
How loudly his anger arose
'Gainst the great, and the good, and the brave, and the fair,
Whom, in the true spirit of spiteful despair
He accounted his natural foes!

But the life of the Gander we need not relate,
Nor describe how he flourished and fell—
We all know his folly—and as for his fate,
Remembrance must long be oppressed with the weight
Of that "strange insupportable smell!"

And now that his carcass at length is at rest,
And rankles in rotten repose—
When the regent of day has gone down in the West,
His spirit thus wanders, unpitied, unblest,
And noxious still to the nose!

The Ghost of a Goose is a curious sight—
A strange enough phantom at best:
But far may you travel, before you shall light
On such a preposterous spirit of night
As the Ghost of the Goose of the West!

His figure, his gesture, his aspect, his air,
His waddle—they still are the same—
But his ill-fated carcass is naked and bare,
Displaying the marks of a recent affair,
That his friends are unwilling to name.

And a spirit like this, in a garb of Goose-skin,
Where plumage refuses to grow,
Is doubly absurd, when there hangs at his chin,
The shadowy shape of a Trophy of Tin,
The Medal he gain'd at the show.

Thus nightly he waddles around and around
Each loved and familiar scene—
The Goose-dubs, of course, are his favourite ground—
But sometimes the spectre may even be found
Near the door of the very Tontine![1]

And there, when the usual party are met,
"Just thinking" of oysters and ale,

[1] A hotel in Glasgow.

The plan of the evening is quite overset,—
For the Ghost of a Goose is a very bad whet,—
And the Knights of the Shell turn tail!

By the church of Saint Mungo he often has sat,
On a tombstone, awaiting the day,
When the rest of the ghosts, and the owl, and the bat,
Alarmed at a phantom so fetid and fat,
Have fled with a shriek of dismay!

And oh! but to hear him when making his moan
In that region remote and recluse—
It is not a gabble—it is not a groan—
Description despairs in describing the tone
Of the ill-fated Ghost of the Goose!

And although 'twas a rule among spirits of old
To speak not, except in reply,—
With the Ghost of the Gander this rule doesn't hold,
For he always is ready his "tale to unfold,"
With a sad and a sulphurous sigh!

With accent unearthly, and piteous look,
He curses the day he was dress'd—
He calls for revenge on the scullion, the cook—
But chief upon him who the task undertook
Of dissecting the Goose of the West!

But long may he wander alarming the night,
And vengeance invoking in vain—
For no one in Glasgow e'er pitied his plight,
And many there are who would even delight
If he could be dissected again!

There are Masses for many a spirit's repose,
And spells that can lay them at rest;
But who would e'er dream of assuaging the woes
Of one so offensive to eyes, ears, and nose,
As the Ghost of the Goose of the West!

Tickler. Bravissimo! Bravissimo!

Shepherd. Anchor! Anchor!

North. I have done so, James. I have brought my verse to an anchor.

Tickler. Encore! Encore—encore—Kit—encore—

Shepherd. That's what I mean, sir. Hangcur! Hangcur! Hangcur!

North. No — gentlemen. Pardon me. But feeling myself in voice, I have no objection to compound with a parody on "Tom Bowling." After that, let us set in to serious thinking. You must suppose the Gander buried in a dunghill.

Tickler. No violent supposition, certainly, sir.

(North *sings.*)

Air—"*Tom Bowling.*"

1.

Here a foul hulk lies Glasgow's Gander,
The vilest of his race,—
Alike unfit for spit or brander,
This is his proper place!
His aspect was the most ungainly,
And those who knew him well
Say, that you might discover plainly
His presence by the smell!

2.

This bird of mud was still reviling
Each of the Birds of Air,
His columns still of filth compiling,—
The splutter of despair!
And toiling thus in his vocation,
His Chronicle will tell
How you might prove to demonstration
His labours from the Smell!

3.

And when by this rash hand dissected
On that unhappy Night,
He proved, as might have been expected,
Indeed "a Sorry Sight!"
The fainting-fits—the fumigation—
On these my Song would dwell,
But it concludes in Suffocation
From memory of that Smell!

Tickler. Faugh! faugh! faugh!

Shepherd. Feuch! feuch! feuch!

North. Steuch! steuch! steuch!

Shepherd. 'Tis gane. Do you ken, sirs, that I'm waxin unco hungry, and think I could eat some half-dizzen or sae o' hard-biled eggs.

North. I will join you, James, with the utmost alacrity.

Tickler. And so will I—*mordicus.*

Shepherd. We had as weel order twa dizen, and that 'ill leave a few to come and gang on.

[*Bell is rung—the* Pech *appears, disappears, and re-appears with the aforesaid.* Gurney *makes a bolt from the car of Dionysius, and* sic transeunt Noctes.

XXXI.

(NOVEMBER 1831.)

Scene,—the Snuggery. Time,—Five o'Clock. Actors,—North, Tickler, *and the* Shepherd. *Occupation,—Dinner.*

Shepherd. What'n a bill o' fare! As lang's ma airm was the slip o' paper endorsed wi' the vawrious eatems,[1] and I was feared there micht be delusion in the promise; but here, far ayont a' hope, and aboon the wildest flichts o' fancy, the realisation o' the Feast!

North. Mine host has absolutely outdone to-day all his former outdoings. You have indeed, sir.

Ambrose. You make me too happy, sir.

Shepherd. Say ower proud, Picardy.

Ambrose. Pride was not made for man, Mr Hogg.—Mr North, I trust, will forgive me, if I have been too bold.

Shepherd. Nor woman neither. Never mind him; I forgie you, and that's aneuch. You've made a maist excellent observe.

Tickler. Outambrosed Ambrose, by this regal regale!

Shepherd. I ken nae mair impressive situation for a human being to find himsel placed in, than in juxtaposition wi' a mony-dished denner afore the covers hae been removed. The sowl sets itsel at wark wi' a' its faculties, to form definite conceptions o' the infinite vareeities o' veeands on the eve o' being brocht to licht. Can this, it asks itsel in a laigh vice—can this dish, in the immediate vicinity, be, do ye think, a roasted fillet o' veal, sae broon and buttery on the outside, wi' its crisp faulds o' fat, and sae white and sappy wi' its firm breadth o' lean, in the in? Frae its position, I jalouse[2] that ashet can conteen nothing less than a turkey—

[1] *Eatems*—items.

[2] *Jalouse*—suspect.

and I could risk my salvation on't, that while yon's Westphally ham on the tae side, yon's twa how-towdies on the ither. Can you——

Tickler. No man should speak with his mouth full.

Shepherd. Nor his head empty. But you're mistaken if you meant me, Mr Tickler, for ma mouth was at no period o' my late discourse, aboon half fu', as I was carefu' aye to keep swallowing as I went alang, and I dinna believe you could discern ony difference in my utterance. But, besides, I even-doun deny the propriety, as weel's the applicability, o' the apothegm. To enact that nae man shall speak during denner wi' his mouth fu', is about as reasonable as to pass a law that nae man, afore or after denner, shall speak wi' his mouth empty. Some feeble folk, I ken, hae a horror o' doin twa things at ance; but I like to do a score, provided they be in natur no only compatible but congenial.

Tickler. And who, pray, is to be the judge of that?

Shepherd. Mysel! Every man in this warld maun judge for himsel; and on nae account whatsomever suffer ony ither loon to judge for him, itherwise he'll gang to the deevil at a haun-canter.

North. Nobody follows that rule more inviolably than Tickler.

Shepherd. In the body, frae the tie o' his crawvat a' the way doun to that o' his shoon—in the sowl, frae the lightest surmise about a passing cloud on a showery day, to his maist awfu' thochts about a future state, when his "extravagant and erring spirit hies" intil the verra bosom o' eternity.

Tickler. James, a caulker.

Shepherd. Thank ye, sir, wi' a' my wull. That's prime. Pure speerit. Unchristened. Sma' stell. Gran' worm. Peet-reek. Glenlivet. Ferintosh. It wad argue that a man's heart wasna in the richt place, were he no, by pronouncin some bit affectionate epithet, to pay his debt o' gratitude to sic a caulker.

North. James, resume.

Shepherd. Suppose me, sir, surveying the scene, like Moses frae the tap o' Pisgah the Promised Land. There was a morning mist, and Moses stood awhile in imagination. But soon, sun-smitten, burst upon his vision through the translucent ether the region that flowed with milk and honey—while

sighed nae mair the children o' Israel for the flesh-pats o' Egypt. Just sae, sirs, at the uplifting o' the covers, flashed the noo[1] on our een the sudden revelation o' this lang-expected denner. How simultawneous the muvement! As if they had been a' but ae man, a Briareus, like a waff o' lichtnin gaed the haums o' Picardy, and Mon. Cadet, and King Pepin, and Sir Dawvid Gam, and Tappytoorie, and the Pech, and the Hoi Polloi; and, lo and behold! towerin tureens and forest-like epergnes, overshadowing the humbler warld o' ashets! Let nae man pretend after this to tell me the difference atween the Beautifu' and the Shooblime.

North. To him who should assert the distinction I would simply say, "Look at that Round!"

Shepherd. Ay, he wad fin' some diffeeculty in swallowin that, sir. The fack is, that the mawgic o' that Buttock o' Beef, considered as an objeck o' intellectual and moral Taste, lies in—Harmony. It reminds you o' that fine line in Byron, which beyond a' doubt was originally inspired by sic anither objeck, though afterwards differently applied,

"The soul, the music breathing from that face!"

Tickler. Profanation!

Shepherd. What! is there ony profanation in the application o' the principles and practice o' poetry to the common purposes o' life? Fancy and Imagination, sirs, can add an inch o' fat to round or sirloin, while at the same time they sae etherealeese its substance, that you can indulge to the supposable utmost in greediness, without subjectin yoursel, in your ain conscience, to the charge o' grossness—ony mair than did Adam or Eve when dining upon aipples wi' the angel Raphael in the bowers o' Paradise. And Heaven be praised that has bestowed on us three the gracious gift o' a sound, steady, but not unappeasable appeteet.

Tickler. North and I are Epicures—but you, James, I fear are a——

Shepherd. Glutton. Be't sae. There's at least this comfort in ma case, that I look like ma meat——

Tickler. Which at present appears to be cod's head and shoulders.

Shepherd. Whereas, to look at you, a body would imagine

[1] *The noo* (the now)—at this moment.

that you leeved exclusively on sheep's head and trotters. As for you, Mr North, I never could faddom the philosophy o' your fondness for soups. For hotch-potch and cockyleekie the wisest o' men may hae a ruling passion; but to keep plowterin, platefu' after platefu' amang broon soup, is surely no verra consistent wi' your character. It's little better than moss-water. Speakin' o' cockyleekie, the man was an atheist that first polluted it wi' prunes.

North. At least no Christian.

Shepherd. Prunes gie't a sickenin sweetness, till it tastes like a mouthfu' o' a cockney poem; and, scunnerin, you splutter out the fruit, afraid that the loathsome lobe is a stinkin snail.

Tickler. Hogg, you have spoiled my dinner.

Shepherd. Then maun ye be the slave o' the senses, sir; and your verra imagination at the mercy o' your palat—or rather, *veece versa*, the roof o' your mouth maun haud the tenure o' its taste frae anither man's fancy—a pitiable condition—for a single word may change luxuries intil necessaries, and necessaries intil something no eatable, even during a siege.

North. 'Tis all affectation in Tickler this extreme fastidiousness and delicacy.

Shepherd. I defy the utmost power o' langage to disgust me wi' a gude denner. My stamack would soar superior——

Tickler. Mine, too, would rise.

Shepherd. Oh, sir, you're wutty! but I hate puns.—Tickler, is that mock?

Tickler. I believe it is: but the imitation excels the original, even as Byron's *Beppo* is preferable to Frere's *Giants*.

Shepherd. A' but the green fat.

North. Deep must be the foundation, and strong the superstructure, of that friendship which can sustain the shock of seeing its object eating mock-turtle soup from a plate of imitation silver——

Shepherd. Meaner than pewter, as is the soup than sowens. An invaluable apothegm!

North. Not that I belong, James, to the Silver-fork School.[1]

Shepherd. The flunkeys—as we weel ca'd them, sir—a contumelious nicknaame, which that unco dour and somewhat stupit radical in the *Westminster*, would try to make himsel

[1] Novelists of the Theodore Hook class had been thus characterised.

believe he invented ower again, when the impident plagiary changed it—as he did the ither day—into "Lackey."

North. I merely mean, James, that at bed or board I abhor all deception.

Shepherd. Sae, sir, div[1] I. A plated spoon is a pitifu' imposition; recommend me to horn; and then nane o' your egg-spoons, or pap-spoons for weans, but ane about the diameter o' my loof, that when you put it weel ben into your mouth, gars your cheeks swall, and your een shut wi' satisfaction.

Tickler. I should like to have your picture, my dear James, taken in that gesture.

North. Finely done in miniature, by MacLeay.

Tickler. No. By some savage Rosa.

Shepherd. A' I mean, sirs, is sincerity and plain-dealing. "One man," says the auld proverb, "is born wi' a silver spoon in his mouth, and another wi' a wudden ladle." Noo, what would be the feelings o' the first, were he to find that fortune had clapt intil his mouth, as Nature was geein him to the warld, what to a' appearance was a silver spoon, and by the howdie and a' the kimmers[2] sae denominated accordingly, but when shown to Mr Morton the jeweller, or Messrs Mackay and Cunninghame, was pronounced plated? He would sigh sair for the wudden ladle. Indeed, gents, I'm no sure but it's better nor even the real siller metal. In the first place, it's no sae apt to be stown;[3] in the second, maist things taste weel out o' wud; thirdly, there's nae expense in keepin't clean, whereas siller requires constant pipe-clay, leather, or flannen; fourthly, I've seen them wi' a maist beautifu' polish, acquired in coorse o' time by the simple process o' sookin the horn as it gaed in and out o' the mouth; fifthly, there's ten thousand times mair vareeity in the colours; sixthly——

Tickler. Enough in praise of the Wooden Spoon.[4] Poor fellow! I always pity that unfortunate annual.

Shepherd. Unfortunate annual! You canna weel be fou already; yet, certes, you're beginnin to haver—and indeed I have observed, no without pain, that a single caulker somehoo or ither superannuates ye, Mr Tickler.

[1] *Div*—do. [2] *Kimmers*—gossips. [3] *Stown*—stolen.

[4] The lowest graduate in honours at Cambridge is so called.

North. James, you have spoken like yourself on the subject of wooden spoons. 'Twas a simple but sapient homily. "*Seems*, madam! nay, it *is*." Be that my rule of life.

Shepherd. The general rule admits but o' ae exception—Vermicelli? What that sort o' soup 's composed o' I never hae been able to form ony feasible conjecture. Aneuch for me to ken, on your authority, Mr North, that it's no worms.

North. I have no recollection of having ever given you such assurance, James.

Shepherd. Your memory, my dear sir, you'll excuse me for mentionin't, is no just what it used to be——

North. You are exceedingly im——

Shepherd. Pertinent. Pardon me for takin the word out o' your mouth, sir—but as for your judgment——

North. I believe you are right, my dear James. The memory is but a poor power after all—well enough for the mind in youth, when its business is to collect a store of ideas——

Shepherd. But altogether useless in auld age, sir, when the Intellect——

North. Is Lord Paramount—and all his subjects come flocking of their own accord to lay themselves in loyalty at his feet.

Shepherd. There he sits on his throne, on his head a croon, and in his haun a sceptre. Cawm is his face as the sea—and his brow like a snaw-white mountain. By divine right a king!

North. Spare my blushes.

Shepherd. I wasna speakin o' you, sir—sae you needna blush. I was speakin o' the Abstrack Power o' Intellect personified in an Eemage, "whose stature reached the sky," and whose coontenance, serenely fu' o' thocht, partook o' the majestic stillness o' the region that is glorified by the setting sun.

North. My dear boy, spare my blushes.

Shepherd. Hem. (His face can nae mair blush than the belly o' a hen redbreast.) What philosopher, like an adjutant-general, may order out on parawde the thochts and feelings, and, strick though he be as a disciplinawrian, be obeyed by that irregular and aften mutinous Macedonian phalanx?

North. The Philosophy of the Human Mind, I am credibly informed, James, is in its infancy——

Shepherd. Aiblins, sir, in its second childhood—witness Phrenology.

North. You have a very fine forehead, James.

Shepherd. Mind, sir, that I wasna sayin that Phrenology was fause. On the contrar, I think there's a great deal o' truth in what they say about the shape and size o' the head—but——

Tickler. That with the exception of some half-dozen or so, such as Combe and the Scotts, the Edinburgh Phrenologists are the Flower of our Scottish Fools——

North. See their Journal—*passim.*

Shepherd. That wadna be fair, sir—to judge o' a periodical wark, by merely passin the shop-wundow where it may be lyin exposed like a dead ool,[1] wi' wings extended on a barn-door——

North. *Passim* and *en passant* have not the same meaning, James, though I could mention one ingenious modern Athenian who appears to think so.

Shepherd. Words that hae the same soun' ought to hae the same sense—though, I admit, that's no aye the case—for itherwise langage misleads. For example, only yestreen at a party, a pert, prim, pompous prater, wi' a peerie-weerie[2] expression about the een, asked me what I thocht, in this stormy state o' the atmosphere, would become o' the Peers? I answered, simply aneuch, that if wrapped up in fresh straw, and laid in a dry place, safe frae the damp, they would keep till Christmas. The cretur, after ha'in said something, he supposed, insupportably severe on me for the use o' feegurative langage on sic a terrible topic, began to what he ca'd "impune ma opinion," and to grow unco foul-mouthed on the Duke of Wellington. I thocht o' Saughton-ha'; but that painfu' suspicion was soon removed frae ma mind, for I fand that he was speakin o' the Peers in Parliament, and me o' jargonells.

North. Timothy, is not James very pleasant?

Tickler. Very.

Shepherd. There's the doctrine o' the association o' Ideas. Thomas Broon, wha kent as muckle about poetry as that poker, and wrote it about as weel as that shovel, and criticeesed it about as weel as thae tangs, pretended to inform mankind at

[1] *Ool*—Owl. [2] *Peerie-weerie*—insignificant.

large hoo ae idea took place o' anither, for he was what is ca'd a great metaphysician. The mind, he said—for I hae read his lectures—had nae power—frae which I conclude that, according to him, it's aye passive—a doctrine I beg leave maist positeevely to contradick, as contrar to the haill tenor o' ma ain experience. The human mind is never, by ony chance, ae single moment passive—but at a' times, day and nicht——

North. "Sleep hath her separate world, as wide as dreams!"

Shepherd. Tuts. What for are you aye quotin that conceited cretur Wudsworth? Canna ye follow his example, and quote yoursel?

North. I should despise doing that, James—I leave it to my brethren of mankind.

Shepherd. Day and nicht is the mind active; and indeed sleep is but the intensest state o' wakefu'ness.

Tickler. Especially when through the whole house is heard a snore that might waken the dead.

Shepherd. Just sae. It's a lee to say there can be sic a state as sleep without a snore. In a dwawm or fent man nor woman snores nane—for that is temporary death. But sleep is not death—nor yet death's brither,[1] though it has been ca'd sae by ane wha should hae kent better—but it is the activity o' spiritual life.

Tickler. Come, James, let us hear you on dreams.

Shepherd. No—till after sooper—whan we shall discuss Dreams and Ghosts. Suffice it for the present to confine mysel to ae sentence, and to ask you baith this question—what pheelosopher has ever yet explained the behaviour o' ideas, even in their soberest condition, much less when they are at their wildest, and wi' a birr and a bum break through a' established laws, like "burnished flees in pride o' May," as Thomson says, through sae mony speeders' wabs, carryin them awa wi' them on their tails up alaft into the empyrean in amang the motes o' the sun?

North. None.

Shepherd. The Sowl has nae power!!! Hasna't??? Hae Ideas, then, nae power either? And what are Ideas, sir? Just the Sowl hersel, and naething but the Sowl. Or, if you wad rather hae't sae, the Evolutions and Revolutions, and

[1] "Death and his brother Sleep."—SHELLEY.

Transpositions and Transfigurations, and Transmigrations and Transmogrifications o' the Sowl, the only primal and perpetual mobile in creation——

North and Tickler. Hear! Hear! Hear!

Shepherd. What gies ae idea the lead o' a' the rest? And what inspires a' the rest to let him tak the lead—whether like a great big ram loupin through a gap in the hedge, and followed by scores o' silly sheep—or like a michty coal-black stallion wi' lang fleein mane and tail, galloping in front o' a thousand bonny meers, a' thunderin after the desert-born—or like the despot red-deer, carryin his antlers up the mountain afore sae mony hundred handsome hinds, bellin sae fiercely that the very far-aff echoes are frichtened to answer him, and dee fently awa amang the cliffs o' Ben-y-Glo?

North. Tickler!

Tickler. North!

Shepherd. Or like the Sovereign Stork, that leads "high overhead the airy caravan"——

Tickler. Or like the great Glasgow Gander, waddling before his bevy along the Goose-dubs——

Shepherd. Haw! haw! haw! What plausible explanation, you may weel ask, could ever be gien o' sic an idea as him—were you to be aloo'd to confine yoursel even to his doup, an enormity alike ayont[1] adequate comprehension and punishment!—But the discussion's gettin ower deep, sir, for Mr Tickler—let's adapt oursels to the capacities o' our hearers—for o' a' conversation that is, if not the sole, the sovereign charm.

Tickler. An old saying, Hogg—throw not pearls before swine.

Shepherd. It aye strikes a cauld damp through me, Mr North, to hear a man, for whom ane entertains ony sort o' regard, wi' an air o' pomposity geein vent to an auncient adage that had served its time afore the Flood, just as if it were an apothegm kittled by himsel on the verra spat. And the case is warst ava, when the perpetrawtor, as the noo, happens to be in his ain way an original. Southside, you sometimes speak, sir, like a Sumph.

Tickler. James, what is a Sumph?

Shepherd. A Sumph, Timothy, is a chiel to whom Natur has

[1] *Ayont*—beyond.

denied ony considerable share o' understaunin, without ha'in chose to mak him just a'thegither an indisputable idiot.

North. Hem! I've got a nasty cold.

Shepherd. His puir pawrents haena the comfort o' bein able, without frequent misgivings, to consider him a natural-born fule, for you see he can be taucht the letters o' the alphabet, and even to read wee bits o' short words, no in write but in prent, sae that he may in a limited sense be even something o' a scholar.

North. A booby of promise.

Shepherd. Just sae, sir—I've kent sumphs no that ill-spellers. But then, you see, sir, about some sax or seven years auld, the mind of the sumphie is seen to be stationary, and generally about twal it begins slawly to retrograwd; sae that at about twenty—and at that age, if you please, sir, we shall consider him—he has verra little mair sense nor a sookin babby.

North. Tickler—eyes right—attend to the Shepherd.

Shepherd. Nevertheless, he is in possession o' knowledge ayont the reach o' Betty Foy's son and heir, so rationally celebrated by Mr Wudsworth in his Excursion——

North. "Lyrical Ballads."

Shepherd. I mean Bauldy Foy's excursion for the doctor.

North. Well?

Shepherd. Kens sun frae moon, cock frae hen, and richt weel man frae woman; for it is a curious fact that your sumph is as amatory as Solomon himsel, and ye generally find him married and standin at the door o' his house like a schule-maister.

North. Like a schoolmaster—How?

Shepherd. The green before his house owerflows wi' weans, a' his ain progeny; and his wife, a comely body, wi' twins on her breist, is aiblins, wi' a pleased face, seen smilin ower his shouther.

North—

> "O fortunati nimium! sua si bona norint
> Sumphiculi!"

Shepherd. I doubt, sir, if you hae ony authority for the formation o' that diminutive. Let's hae gude Latin, or nane.

North. Mine is always good—but in Maga often miserably marred by the printing, to the horror of Priscian's ghost.

Shepherd. Sumphs are aye fattish—wi' round legs liko

women — generally wi' red and white complexions — though I've kent them black-a-viced, and no ill-lookin, were it no for a want o' something you canna at first sicht weel tell what, till you find by degrees that it's a want o' everything—a want o' expression, a want o' air, a want o' mainner, a want o' smeddum, a want o' vigour, a want o' sense, a want o' feelin — in short, a want o' sowl—a deficit which nae painstakin in education can ever supply; and then, oholoos! but they're dour, dour, dour — obstinater than either pigs or cuddies, and waur to drive alang the high road o' life. For, by tyin a string to the hint leg o' a grumphie, and keepin jerk-jerkin him back, you can wile him forrits by fits and starts; and the maist contumacious cuddie you can transplant at last, by pour-pourin upon his hurdies the oil o' hazel; but neither by priggin nor prayin, by reason nor by rung, when the fit's on him, frae his position may mortal man howp to move a sumph.

North. Too true. I can answer for the animal.

Shepherd. Sometimes he'll staun' for hours in the rain, though he has gotten the rheumatics, rather than come into the house, just because his wife has sent out ane o' the weans to ca' in its faither at a sulky juncture—and in the tantrums he'll pretend no to hear the denner-bell, though ever so hungry; and if a country squire, which he often is, hides himsel somewhere amang the shrubs in the policy.

North. Covering himself with laurel.

Shepherd. Then, oh! but the sumph is selfish — selfish. What a rage he flees intil at beggars! His charity never gangs farther than sayin he's sorry he happens no to hae a bawbee in his pocket. When ane o' his weans at tea-time asks for a lump o' sugar, he either refuses it, or selects the wee'est bit in the bowl—but taks care to steal a gey big piece for himsel, for he is awfu' fond o' sweet things, and dooks his butter and bread deep into the carvey. He is often in the press——

North. What! an author?

Shepherd. In the dining-room press, stealin jam, and aften lickin wi' his tongue the thin paper on the taps o' jeely-cans —and sometimes observed by the lad or lass comin in to mend the fire, in a great hurry secretin tarts in the pouches o' his breeks, or leavin them in his alarm o' detection half-

eaten on the shelf, and ready to accuse the mice o' the rubbery.

North. What are his politics?

Shepherd. You surely needna ask that, sir. He belangs to the Cheese-paring and Candle-end Saveall School — is a follower o' Josey Hume — and 's aye ready to vote for retrenchment.

North. His religion?

Shepherd. Consists solely in fear o' the deevil, whom in childhood the sumph saw in a wudcut—and never since went to bed without sayin his prayers, to escape a charge o' hornin.[1]

North. Is all this, James, a description of an individual, or of a genus?

Shepherd. A genus, I jalouse, is but a generic name for a number o' individuals ha'in in common certain characteristics; so that, describe the genus and you hae before you the individual—describe the individual and behold the genus. True that there's nae genus consisting but o' ae individual—but the reason o' that is that there never was an individual stannin in nature exclusively by himsel—if there was, then he would undoubtedly be likewise his ain genus. And, pray, why not?

Tickler. What is the meaning of all this botheration about sumphs?

Shepherd. Botheration about sumphs! In answer to some stuff of Southside's, I said, he spoke like a sumph. Mr Tickler then asked me to describe a sumph — and this sketch is at his service. 'Tis the merest outline; but I have pented him to the life in a novelle. Soon as the Reform Bill is feenally settled, Mr Blackwood is to publish, in three volumms, "The Sumph; by the Shepherd." He'll hae a prodigious rin.

North. Cut out *Clifford.*

Shepherd. Na, Bullwer's[2] a clever chiel—and, in ma opinion, describes fashionable life the best o' a' the Lunnoners.

North. Except the author of *Granby.*

Shepherd. I hae never read the Marquis o' Granby. Send him out to the Forest.

Tickler. In *your* opinion!

Shepherd. Ay—in ma opinion. What's to prevent him that

[1] A *charge of horning* is, in Scotch law, a suit for the recovery of a debt.

[2] Bulwer.

wons in huts frae judgin o' the life in ha's, ony mair than him that wons in ha's frae judgin o' the life in huts? Na—I'm no verra sure gif the lord's no the best critic on the lucubrations o' the lout, and the lout on the lord's. For whatever's truly good, and emanates brichtly frae the shrine o' natur, will strike wi' a sudden charm on the heart o' him that is made acquented wi't frae a distance, as if it were a revelation o' the same law pervadin a' spheres o' being alike, though vainly thocht to be separate pairts o' ae great and vawrious system. Canna a King, if worthy to wear a croon, contemplate wi' delicht Burns's "Cottar's Saturday Nicht," and canna a peasant admire the pictur o' piety in a palace?

Tickler. James—good.

Shepherd. Think ye that Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd had to learn muckle either in the way o' mind or mainners, when discovered to be by birth a baronet?

North. I verily believe not much.

Shepherd. Strip a kintra lad or lass o' their claes——

Tickler. No, no, James.

Shepherd. But I say ay, ay. Strip a kintra lass, o' laigh degree, perfectly skuddy,[1] and set her aside a toun belle o' noble bluid, equally naked, on a pedestal, like twa sister statues by Chauntrey or Macdonald, wi' their airms leanin wi' affectionate elegance on ilk ither's snawy shouther, or twined roun' their lily necks, and wha micht be able to tell the ewe-milker frae the duchess?

Tickler. Not I—without my specks.

Shepherd. Or watch first the ane and then the ither doin some duty to a pawrent, suppose, leadin a blin' faither out intil the sun, and sittin aside him, aiblins at his feet, wi' ae ivory airm hangin ower his knees, and the ither haun haudin a book—best o' a', if the Bible—while her tearfu' een can yet weel discern the words o' comfort that her smilin lips do musically receet—and will ony Christian man tell me, that they arena baith angels, and however far apairt they may leeve on earth, winna dwall thegither in heaven?

North. I confess it does surprise me, to hear you, James, express yourself so beautifully over haggis.

Shepherd. What for? What's a wee haggis but a big raggoo?—an' a big raggoo, but a wee haggis? But, will

[1] *Skuddy*—naked.

you believe me, Mr Tickler, I was sae taen up wi' the natural sentiment, that I kentna what was on my plate.

Tickler. And probably have no recollection of having, within the last ten minutes, eat a how-towdy.

Shepherd. What the deevil are you twa about? Circumnavigating the table in arm-chairs! What! Am I on wheels too?

[*The* Shepherd *follows* North *and* Tickler *round the genial board.*

North. How do you like this fancy, my dear James?

Shepherd. Just excessively, sir. It gies us a perfeck command o' the entire table, east and wast, north and south; and, at present, I calculate that I am cuttin the equawtor.

North. It relieves Mr Ambrose and his young gentlemen from unnecessary attendance—and, besides, the exercise is most salutary to persons of our age, who are apt to get fat and indolent.

Shepherd. Fozy. So ye contrive to rin upon horrals,[1] halting before a darling dish, and then away on a voyage o' new discovery. This explains the itherwise unaccountable size o' this immense circle o' a table. Safe us! It would sit forty! And yet, by this ingenious contrivance, it is just about sufficient size for us Three. Hae ye taen out a pawtent?

North. No. I hate monopolies.

Shepherd. What! You, the famous foe o' Free-tredd!

North. With our national debt——

Shepherd. Dinna tempt me, sir, to lose a' patience under a treatise on taxes——

North. Well—I won't. But you admire these curricles?

Shepherd. Movable at the touch o' the wee finger. Whase invention?

North. My own.

Shepherd. You Dædalus!

North. The principle, James, I believe is perfect—but I have not been yet able to get the construction of the vehicle exactly to my mind.

Shepherd. I dinna ken what mair you could howp for, unless it were to move at a thocht. Farewell, sirs, I'm aff across the line to yon pie—nae sma' bulk even at this distance. Can it be pigeons? [Shepherd *wheels away south-east.*

[1] *Horrals* or *Whorles*—very small wheels.

North. Take your trumpet.

Shepherd. That beats a'. For ilka man a silver speakin-trumpet! Let's try mine. (*Shepherd puts his trumpet to his mouth*). Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy!

North (*trumpet-tongued*). The Endeavour[1]—bound for——

Shepherd. Whisht—whisht—sir.—I beseech you whisht. Nae drums can staun' siccan a trumpet, blawn by siccan lungs (*laying down his trumpet*). This is, indeed, the Pie o' Pies. I howp Mr Tickler 'ill no think o' wheelin roun' to this quarter o' the globe.

Tickler (*on the trumpet*). What sort of picking have you got at the Antipodes, James?

Shepherd. Roar a little louder—for I'm dull o' hearin. Is he speakin o' the Bench o' Bishops?

Tickler (*as before, but louder*). What pie?

Shepherd. Ay—ay.

Tickler (*larghetto*). What pie?

Shepherd. Ay — ay. What'n a gran' echo up in yon corner!

[TICKLER *wheels away in search of the north-west passage —and on his approach the* SHEPHERD *weighs anchor with the pie, and keeps beating up to windward—close-hauled—at the rate of eight knots, chased by* SOUTHSIDE, *who is seen dropping fast to leeward.*

North. He'll not weather the point of Firkin.[2]

Shepherd (*putting about under North's stern*). I'll rin for protection frae the Pirrat,[3] under the guns o' the old Admiral —and, being on the same station, I suppose he's entitled to his ain share o' the prize. Here, my jolly veteran, here's the Pie. Begin wi a couple o' cushats, and we'll divide atween us the croon o' paste in the middle, about as big's the ane the King—God bless him—wore at the coronation.

[TICKLER *wheels his chair into the nook, on the right of the chimney-piece.*

Southside, hae you deserted the diet? O, man! you're surely no sulky? Come back—come back, I beseech you—and let us shake hauns. It 'ill never do for us true Tories to quarrel amang oursels at this creesis. What'n a triumph to the Whigs, when they hear o' this schism? Let's a' hae a

[1] Professor Wilson had a yacht on Windermere named "The Endeavour."

[2] A point of land running into Loch Lomond is so called. [3] Pirate.

finger in the pie, and as the Lord-Chancellor said, and I presume did, in the House o' Lords—"on my bended knees, I implore you to pass this bill!"[1]

[*The* SHEPHERD *kneels before* TICKLER *and presents to him a plateful of the Pie.*

Tickler (*returning to the administration*). James, we have conquered, and we are reconciled.

North. Trumpets! [*Three trumpet cheers.*

Gurney (*rushing in alarm from the ear of Dionysius*). Gentlemen, the house is surrounded by a mob of at least fifty thousand Reformers, who with dreadful hurrahs are shouting for blood.

Shepherd. Fifty thousan'! Wha counted the radical rascals?

Gurney. I conjecture their numbers from their noise. For Heaven's sake, Mr North, do not attempt to address the mob——

North. Trumpets! [*Three trumpet cheers.*

Gurney (*retiring much abashed into his ear*). Miraculous!

Ambrose (*entering with much emotion*). Mr North, I fear the house is surrounded by the enemies of the constitution, demanding the person of the Protector——

Shepherd. Trumpets!

[*Three trumpet cheers. Exit* AMBROSE, *in astonishment.*

North. Judging from appearances, I presume dinner is over.

Shepherd. A'm stawed.[2]

North. There is hardly any subject which we have not touched, and not one have we touched which we did not adorn.

Shepherd. By subjecks do you mean dishes? Certes, we have discussed a hantle o' them—some pairtly, and ithers totally; but there's food on the brodd yet sufficient for a score o' ordinar men——

Tickler. And we shall have it served up, James, to supper.

Shepherd. Soun' doctrine. What's faith without warks?

North. Now, gentlemen, a fair start. Draw up on my right, James—elbow to elbow. Tickler, your place is on the

[1] Lord Brougham concluded his speech on Parliamentary Reform, October 7, 1831, in the following terms:—"I pray and exhort you not to reject this measure. By all you hold most dear—by all the ties that bind every one of us to our common order, and our common country, I solemnly adjure you, I warn you,—I implore,—yea, *on my bended knees*, I supplicate you—Reject not this Bill."

[2] *Stawed*—surfeited.

extrême gauche. You both know the course. The hearth-rug of the Snuggery's the goal. All ready? Away!

[*The start is the most beautiful thing ever seen—and all Three at once make play.*

Scene II.—The Snuggery.

Enter NORTH *in his Flying Chair, at the rate of the Derby, beating, by several lengths,* TICKLER *and the* SHEPHERD, *now neck and neck.*

North (*pulling up as soon as he has passed the Judges' stand*). Our nags are pretty much on a par, I believe, in point of condition, but much depends, in a short race, on a good start, and there the old man showed his jockeyship.

Shepherd. 'Twas a fause start, sir—'twas a fause start—I'll swear it was a fause start, till ma deein day—for I hadna gotten mysel settled in the saiddle, till ye was aff like a shot, and afore I could get intil a gallop, you was half way across the flat o' the saloon.

North. James, there could be no mistake. The signal to start was given by Saturn himself; and——

Shepherd. And then Tickler, afore me and him got to the fauldin-doors, after some desperate crossin and jostlin, I alloo, on baith sides, ran me clean aff the coorse, and I had to make a complete circle in the bow-window or I could get the head o' my horse pinted again in a richt direction for winnin the race. Ca' ye that fair? I shall refer the haill business to the decision o' the Jockey Club.

North. What have you to say, Tickler, in answer to this very serious charge?

Tickler. Out of his own mouth, sir, I convict him of conduct that must have the effect of debarring the Shepherd from ever again competing for these stakes.

Shepherd. For what steaks? Do you mean to mainteen, you brazen-faced neerdoweel, that I am never to be alloo'd again to rin Mr North frae the saloon to the Snuggery for ony steaks we choose, or chops either? Things 'ill hae come to a pretty pass, when it sall be necessar to ask your leave to start—you blacklegs.

Tickler. He's confessed the crossing and jostling.

Shepherd. You lee. Wha began't? We started sidey-by-sidey, ye see, sir, frae the rug afore the fire, where we was a'

three drawn up, and just as you was gaun out o' sicht atween the pillars, Tickler and me ran foul o' ane anither at the nor'-east end o' the circular. There was nae faut on either side there, and am no blamin him, except for ackwardness, which was aiblins mutual. As sune's we had gotten disentangled, we entered by look o' ee, if no word o' mouth, intil a social compact to rin roun' opposite sides o' the table—which we did—and in proof that neither of us had gained an inch on the ither, no sooner had we rounded the south-west cape, than together came we wi' sic a clash, that I thocht we had been baith killed on the spat. There was nae faut on either side there, ony mair than there had been at the nor'-east; but then began his violation o' a' honour; for ha'in succeeded in shovin mysel aff, I was makin for the fauldin-doors—due west—ettlin for the inside, to get a short turn—when whuppin and spurrin like mad, what does he do, but charge me richt on the flank, and drive me, as I said afore, several yards aff the coorse, towards the bow-window, where I was necessitated to fetch a circumbendibus that wad hae lost me the race had I ridden Eclipse. Ca' ye that fair? But it was agreed that we were to be guided by the law of Newmarket, sae I'll refer the haill affair to the Jockey Club.

Tickler. Hear me for a moment, sir. True, we got entangled at the nor'-west—most true at the sou'-west came we together with a clash. But what means the Shepherd by shoving off? Why, sir, he caught hold of my right arm as in a vice, so that I could make no use of that member, while, at the same time, he locked me into his own rear, and then away he went like a two-year-old, having, as he vainly dreamt, the race in hand by that manœuvre, so disgraceful to the character of the carpet.

North. If you please turf.

Tickler. Under such circumstances, was I to consider myself bound by laws which he himself had broken and reduced to a dead letter? No. My subsequent conduct he has accurately described, off the course—for we have a bit of speed in us—I drove him; but as for the circumbendibus in the bow-window, we must believe that on his own word.

Shepherd. And daur you, sir, or ony man breathin' to dout ma word——

North. Be calm, gentlemen. The dispute need not be referred to the Club; for, consider *you were nowhere.*

Shepherd. Eh?

North. You were both distanced.

Shepherd. Baith distanced! Hoo? Where's the post?

North. The door-post of the Snuggery.

Shepherd. Baith our noses were through afore you had reached the rug. I'll tak ma Bible-oath on't. Werena they, Tickler?

Tickler. Both.

North. Not a soul of you entered this room for several seconds after I had dismounted——

Shepherd. After ye had dismounted? Haw! haw! haw! Tickler! North confesses he had dismounted afore he was weighed—and has thereby lost the race. Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah! Noo, ours was a dead heat—so let us divide the stakes——

Tickler. With all my heart; but we ran for the Gold Cup.

Shepherd. Eh! sae we did, man; and yonner it's on the sideboard—a bonny bit o' bullion. Let's keep it year about; and, to prevent ony hargle-barglin about it, let the first turn be mine; oh! but it 'll do wee Jamie's heart gude to glower on't stannin aside the siller punch-bowl I got frae my friend Mr—— What's the matter wi' ye, Mr North? What for sae doun i' the mouth? Why fret sae at a trifle?

North. No honour can accrue from a conquest achieved by a quirk.

Shepherd. Nor dishonour frae defeat;—then "prithee why so pale, wan lover? prithee why so pale?"

Tickler. I can hardly credit my senses when I hear an old sportsman call that a quirk, which is in fact one of the foundation-stones of the law of Racing.

Shepherd. I maun gang back for ma shoon.

North. Your shoon?

Shepherd. Ay, ma shoon—I flung them baith in Mr Tickler's face—for which I noo ask his pardon—when he ran me aff the coorse——

Tickler. No offence, my dear James, for I returned the compliment with both snuff-boxes——

North. Oh! ho! So you who urge against me the objection of having dismounted before going to scale, both confess that you flung away weight during the race!

Shepherd. Eh? Mr Tickler, answer him—

Tickler. Do, James.

Shepherd (*scratching his head with one hand, and stroking his chin with the other*). We've a' three won, and we've a' three lost. That's the short and the lang o't — sae the Cup maun staun' ower till anither trial.

North. Let it be decided now. From Snuggery to Saloon.

Shepherd. What? after frae Saloon to Snuggery? That would be reversin the order o' nature. Besides, we maun a' three be unco dry—sae let's turn to, till the table—and see what's to be had in the way o' drink. What'n frutes?

North. These are Ribstons, James—a pleasant apple—

Shepherd. And what's thir?

North. Golden pippins.

Hogg. Sic jargonels! shaped like peeries—and yon Auchans[1] (can they be ripe?) like taps. And what ca' ye thae, like great big fir-cones wi' outlandish-lookin palm-tree leaves archin frae them wi' an elegance o' their ain, rouch though they seem in the rin', and aiblins prickly? What ca' ye them?

North. Pine-apples.

Shepherd. I've often heard tell o' them—but never clapped een on them afore. And these are pines! Oh! but the scent is sweet, sweet—and wild as sweet—and as wild restorative. I'se tak some jargonels afterwards—but I'll join you noo, sir, in a pair o' pines.

[North *gives the* Shepherd *a pine-apple.*

Hoo are they eaten?

Tickler. With pepper, mustard, and vinegar, like oysters, James.

Shepherd. I'm thinkin you maun be leein.

Tickler. Some people prefer catsup.

Shepherd. Haud your blethers. Catchup's gran kitchen[2] for a' kinds o' flesh, fish, and fule, but for frutes the rule is "sugar or naething,"—and if this pine keep the taste o' promise to the palat, made by the scent he sends through the nose, nae extrawneous sweetness will he need, self-sufficient in his ain sappiness, rich as the colour o' pinks, in which it is sae savourily enshrined.——I never pree'd ony taste half sae delicious as that in a' ma born days! Ribstanes, pippins, jargonels, peaches, nectrins, currans and strawberries, grapes and grozets, a' in ane! The concentrated essence o' a' ither

[1] *Auchans*—a kind of pear. [2] *Kitchen*—relish.

frutes, harmoneesed by a peculiar tone o' its ain—till it melts in the mouth like material music.

North (*pouring out for the Shepherd a glass of sparkling champagne*). Quick, James—quick—ere the ethereal particles escape to heaven.

Shepherd. You're no passin aff soddy[1] upon me! Soddy's ma abhorrence—it's sae like thin soap-suds.

North. Fair play's a jewel, my dear Shepherd.

"From the vine-cover'd hills and gay regions of France"——

Shepherd.—

"See the day-star o' liberty rise."

That beats ony guseberry—and drinks prime wi' pine. Anither glass. And anither. Noo put aside the Langshanks—and after a' this daffin let's set in for serious drinkin, thinkin, lookin, and speakin—like three philosophers as we are—and still let our theme be—Human Life.

North. James, I am sick of life. With me "the wine of life is on the lees."

Shepherd. Then drink the dregs and be thankfu'. As lang's there's anither drap, however drumly, in the bottom o' the bottle, dinna despair. But what for are you sick o' life? You're no a verra auld man yet—and although ye was, why mayna an auld man be geyan happy? That's a' ye can expeck noo. But wha's happy—think ye—perfeckly happy—on this side o' the grave? No ane. I left yestreen wee Jamie—God bless him—greetin as his heart would break for the death o' a bit wee doggie that he used to keep playin wi' on the knowe mony an hour when he ought to hae been at his byuck—and when he lifted up his bonny blue een a' fu' o' tears to the skies, after he had seen me bury the puir tyke in the garden, I'se warrant he thocht there was a sair change for the waur in the afternoon licht—for never did callant loe collie as he loed Luath; and to be sure he, on his side, wasna ungratefu'—for Luath keepit lickin his haun till the verra last gasp, though he dee'd of that cruel distemper. Fill your glass, sir.

North. I have been subject to fits of blackest melancholy since I was a child, James.

Shepherd. An' think ye, sir, that naebody has been subjeck

[1] Soda-water.

to fits o' blackest melancholy since they were a bairn, but yoursel? Wi' some it's constitutional, and that's a hopeless case; for it rins, or rather stagnates in the bluid, and meesery has been bequeathed frae father to son, doun mony dismal generations—nor has ceased till some childless suicide, by a maist ruefu' catastrophe, has closed the cleemax, by the unblessed extinction o' the race. But you, my dear sir, are come o' a cheerfu' kind, and mirth laughed in the ha's o' a' your ancestors. Cheer up, sir—cheer up—fill your glass wi' Madeiry—an' nae mair folly about fits—for you're gettin fatter an' fatter every year, and what you ca' despair 's but the dumps.

North. O, mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos!

Shepherd. Ay—passion gies vent to mony an impious prayer! The mair I meditat on ony season o' my life, the mair fearfu' grows the thocht o' leevin't ower again, and my sowl recoils alike frae the bliss, and frae the meesery, as if baith alike had been sae intense that it were impossible they could be re-endured!

North. James, I regard you with much affection.

Shepherd. I ken you do, sir—and I repay't three-fauld; but I canna thole to hear you talkin nonsense. What for are ye no drinkin your Madeiry?

North. How pregnant with pathos to an aged man are those two short lines of Wordsworth—about poor Ruth!

> "Ere she had wept, ere she had mourn'd,
> A young and happy child."

Shepherd. They are beautifu' where they staun', and true; but fause in the abstrack, for the youngest and happiest child has often wept and mourned, even when its mither has been tryin to rock it asleep in its craddle. Think o' the teethin, sir, and a' the colic-pains incident to babbyhood!

North. "You speak to me who never had a child."

Shepherd. I'm no sae sure o' that, sir. Few men hae leeved till threescore and ten without being faithers; but that's no the pint; the pint is the pleasures and pains o' childhood, and hoo nicely are they balanced to us poor sons of a day! I ken naething o' your childhood, sir, nor o' Mr Tickler's, except that in very early life you maun hae been twa stirrin gentlemen——

Tickler. I have heard my mother say that I was a remarkably mild child till about——

Shepherd. Six—when it cost your faither an income for taws to skelp out o' you the innate ferocity that began to break upon you like a rash alang wi' the measles——

Tickler. It is somewhat singular, James, that I never have had measles—nor smallpox—nor hooping-cough—nor scarlet-fever—nor——

Shepherd. There's a braw time comin, for these are complents nane escape; and I shouldna be surprised to see you at next Noctes wi' them a' fowre—a' spotted and blotched, as red as an Indian, or a tile-roof, and crawin like a cock, in a fearsome manner—to which add the Asiatic cholera, and then, ma man, I wadna be in your shoon for the free gift o' the best o' the Duke's store-farms, wi' a' the plenishin—for the fifth comin on the ither fowre, lang as you are, wad cut you aff like a cucumber.

North.—

> "Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
> Ah, fields beloved in vain!
> Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
> A stranger yet to pain!"

Shepherd. That's Gray—and Gray was the best poet that ever belanged to a college—but——

North. All great (except one) and most good poets have belonged to colleges.

Shepherd. Humph. But a line comes soon after that is the key to that stanza—

> "My weary soul they seem to soothe!"

Gray wasna an auld man—far frae it—when he wrote that beautifu' Odd—but he was fu' o' sensibility and genius—and after a lapse o' years, when he beheld again the bits o' bricht and bauld leevin eemages glancin athwart the green—a' the Eton College callants in full cry—his heart amaist dee'd within him at the sicht and the soun'—for his pulse, as he pat his finger to his wrist, beat fent and intermittent, in comparison, and nae wunner that he should fa' intil a dooble delusion about their happiness and his ain meesery. And sae the poem's coloured throughout wi' a pensive spirit o' regret, in some places wi' the gloom o' melancholy, and in ane or twa

amaist black wi' despair. It's a fine picture o' passion, sir, and true to nature in every touch. Yet frae beginnin to end, in the eye o' reason and faith, and religion, it's a' ae lee. Fause, surely, a' thae forebodings o' a fatal futurity. For love, joy, and bliss are not banished frae this life; and in writin that verra poem, maunna the state o' Gray's sowl hae been itsel divine?

North. Tickler?

Tickler. Good.

Shepherd. What are mony o' the pleasures o' memory, sirs, but the pains o' the past spiritualeezed?

North. Tickler?

Tickler. True.

Shepherd. A' human feelings seem somehow or ither to partake o' the same character, when the objects that awake them have withdrawn far, far awa intil the dim distance, or disappeared for ever in the dust.

Tickler. North?

North. The Philosophy of Nature.

Shepherd. And that Tam Cawmel maun hae felt, when he wrote that glorious line—

"And teach impassion'd souls the joy of grief!"

North. The joy of grief! That is a joy known but to the happy, James. The soul that can dream of past sorrows till they touch it with a pensive delight can be suffering under no severe trouble——

Shepherd. Perhaps no, sir. But may that no often happen too, when the heart is amaist dead to a' pleasure in the present, and loves but to converse wi' phantoms? I've seen pale still-faces o' widow-women,—ane sic is afore me the noo, whase husband was killed in the wars lang lang ago in a forgotten battle—she leeves on a sma' pension in a laigh and lonely house,—that bespeak constant communion wi' the dead, and yet nae want either o' a meek and mournfu' sympathy wi' the leevin, provided only ye show them by the considerate gentleness o' your manner, when you chance to ca' on them on a week-day, or meet them at the kirk on Sabbath, that you ken something o' their history, and hae a Christian feelin for their uncomplainin affliction. Surely, sir, at times, when some tender gleam o' memory glides like moonlight across

their path, and reveals in the hush some ineffable eemage o' what was lovely and beloved o' yore, when they were, as they thocht, perfectly happy, although the heart kens weel that 'tis but an eemage, and nae mair—yet still it maun be blest, and let the tears drap as they will on the faded cheek, I should say the puir desolate cretur did in that strange fit o' passion suffer the joy o' grief.

North. You will forgive me, James, when I confess, that though I enjoyed just now the sound of your voice, which seemed to me more than usually pleasant, with a trembling tone of the pathetic, I did not catch the sense of your speech.

Shepherd. I wasna makin a speech, sir—only utterin a sort o' sentiment that has already evaporated clean out o' mind, or passed awa like an uncertain shadow.

North. Misery is selfish, James—and I have lost almost all sympathy with my fellow-creatures, alike in their joys and their sorrows.

Shepherd. Come, come, sir—cheer up, cheer up. It's naething but the blue devils.

North. All dead—one after another—the friends in whom lay the light and might of my life—and memory's self is faithless now to the "old familiar faces." Eyes—brows—lips—smiles—voices—all—all forgotten! Pitiable, indeed, is old age, when love itself grows feeble in the heart, and yet the dotard is still conscious that he is day by day letting some sacred remembrance slip for ever from him that he once cherished devoutly in his heart's core, and feels that mental decay alone is fast delivering them all up to oblivion!

Shepherd. Sittin wi' rheumy een, mumblin wi' his mouth on his breist, and no kennin frae ither weans his grandchildren wha have come to visit him wi' their mother, his ain bricht and beautifu' dauchter, wha seems to him a stranger passing alang the street.

North. What said you, James?

Shepherd. Naething, sir, naething. I wasna speakin o' you—but o' anither man.

North. They who knew me—and loved me—and honoured me—and admired me—for why fear to use that word, now to me charmless?—all dust! What are a thousand kind acquaintances, James, to him who has buried all the few friends of

his soul—*all the few*—one—two—three—but powerful as a whole army to guard the holiest recesses of life!

Shepherd. An' am I accounted but a kind acquaintance and nae mair! I wha——

North. What have I said to hurt you, my dear James?

Shepherd. Never mind, sir—never mind. I'll try to forget it—but——

North. Stir the fire, James—and give a slight touch to that lamp.

Shepherd. There's a bleeze, sir, at ae blast. An' there's the Orrery, bricht as the nicht in Homer's *Iliad*, about which you wrote sic eloquent havers. And there's your bumper-glass. Noo, sir, be candid and tell me, gif you dinna think that you've been a verra great fule?

North. I believe I have, my dear James. But, by all that is ludicrous here below, look at Tickler!

Shepherd. O for Cruckshank! You see what he's dreaming about in his sleep, sir, lyin on the ae side, wi' that big black sofa-pillow in his arms! He is evidently on his marriage jaunt to the Lakes, and passing the hinnymoon amang the mountains. She's indeed a fearsome dear, the bride. She has gotten nae feturs—and as for feegur, she's the same thickness a' the way doun, as if she was stuffed. But there's nae accountin for taste; and mony a queer cretur gets a husband. Sleep on—sleep on—ye bony pair! for noo you're leadin your lives in Elysium.

North. I hope, James, that neither you nor I have such open countenances in our sleep, as our friend before us.

Shepherd. I canna charge ma memory wi' sic a mouth. What's the maitter? What's the maitter? Lo! Mrs Tickler has either fa'en or loupen out o' the bed, an's tumblin alang the floor! What'n an *exposé!* In decency, sir, really we twa should retire.

North. The blushing bride has absolutely hidden herself under the table.

Shepherd. Oh! but this is gran' sport. Let's blacken his ee-brees, and gie him mistashes.

[*The* Shepherd, *with burnt cork, dexterously makes* Tickler *a Hussar.*

There—you're noo ane o' the Third, at Jock's Lodge. Gie

Mrs Tickler, sir, a touch wi' the crutch, under the table, and send her ower this way, that I may restore her to the bridegroom's longing arms. It's a shame to see her sleepin at the stock[1]—the wife should aye lie neist the wa'. Sae I'll tak the liberty to place her atween her husband's back and that o' the settee. When he waukens he'll hae mony apologies to mak for his bad mainners. But the twa 'ill sune mak it up, and naething in this life's half so sweet as the reconciliation o' lovers' quarrels.

North. By the by, James, who won the salmon medal this season on the Tweed?

Shepherd. Wha, think ye, could it be, ye coof, but mysel? I beat them a' by twa stane wecht. Oh, Mr North, but it wad hae done your heart gude to hae daunered alang the banks wi' me on the 25th, and seen the slauchter. At the third thraw the snout o' a famous fish sookit in ma flee—and for some seconds keepit steadfast in a sort o' eddy that gaed sullenly swirlin at the tail o' yon pool—I needna name't—for the river had risen just to the proper pint, and was black as ink, except when noo and then the sun struggled out frae atween the clud-chinks, and then the water was purple as heather-moss in the season of blaeberries. But that verra instant the flee began to bite him on the tongue, for by a jerk o' the wrist I had slichtly gien him the butt—and sunbeam never swifter shot frae Heaven, than shot that saumon-beam doun intil and out o' the pool below, and alang the saugh-shallows or you come to Juniper Bank. Clap—clap—clap—at the same instant played a couple o' cushats frae an aik aboon my head, at the purr o' the pirn, that let out, in a twinkling, a hunner yards o' Mr Phin's best, strang aneuch to haud a bill or a rhinoceros.

North. Incomparable tackle!

Shepherd. For, far awa doun the flood, see till him, sir—see till him,—loup–loup–loupin intil the air, describin in the spray the rinnin rainbows! Scarcely could I believe, at sic a distance, that he was the same fish. He seemed a saumon divertin himsel, without ony connection in this warld wi' the Shepherd. But we were linked thegither, sir, by the inveesible gut o' destiny—and I chasteesed him in his pastime wi' the rod o' affliction. Windin up—windin up, faster than ever ye grunded coffee—I keepit closin in upon him, till the whale-

[1] *Stock*—forepart of a bed.

bone was amaist perpendicular outower him, as he stoppit to tak breath in a deep plum. You see the savage had gotten sulky, and you micht as weel hae rugged at a rock. Hoo I leuch! Easin the line ever so little, till it just moved slichtly like gossamer in a breath o' wund—I half persuaded him that he had gotten aff; but na, na, ma man, ye ken little about the Kirby-bends, gin ye think the peacock's harl and the tinsy hae slipped frae your jaws! Snoovin up the stream he goes, hither and thither, but still keepin weel in the middle—and noo strecht and steddy as a bridegroom ridin to the kirk.

North. An original image.

Shepherd. Say rather application! Maist majestic, sir, you'll alloo, is that flicht o' a fish when the line cuts the surface without commotion, and you micht imagine that he was sailin unseen below in the style o' an eagle about to fauld his wings on the cliff.

North. Tak tent, James. Be wary, or he will escape.

Shepherd. Never fear, sir. He'll no pit me aff my guard by keepin the croon o' the causey in that gate. I ken what he's ettlin at—and it's naething mair nor less nor yon island. Thinks he to himsel, wi' his tail, "gin I get abreist o' the broom, I'll roun' the rocks, doun the rapids, and break the Shepherd." And nae sooner thocht than done—but bauld in my cork-jacket——

North. That's a new appurtenance to your person, James; I thought you had always angled in bladders.

Shepherd. Sae I used—but last season they fell doun to my heels, and had nearly drooned me—sae I trust noo to my bodyguard.

North. I prefer the air life-preserver.

Shepherd. If it bursts you're gone. Bauld in my cork-jacket I took till the soomin, haudin the rod aboon my head——

North. Like Cæsar his Commentaries.

Shepherd. And gettin fittin on the bit island—there's no a shrub on't, you ken, aboon the waistband o' my breeks—I was just in time to let him easy ower the Fa', and Heaven safe us! he turned up, as he played wallop, a side like a house! He fand noo that he was in the hauns o' his maister, and began to loss heart; for naethin cows the better pairt o' man, brute, fool, or fish, like a sense o' inferiority. Sometimes in a large pairty it suddenly strikes me dumb——

North. But never in the Snuggery, James—never in the Sanctum——

Shepherd. Na, na, na—never i' the Snuggery, never i' the Sanctum, my dear auld man! For there we're a' brithers, and keep bletherin withouten ony sense o' propriety—I ax pardon—o' inferiority—bein' a' on a level, and that lichtsome, like the parallel roads in Glenroy, when the sunshine pours upon them frae the tap o' Ben Nevis.

North. But we forget the fish.

Shepherd. No me. I'll remember him on my deathbed. In body the same, he was entirely anither fish in sowl. He had set his life on the hazard o' a die, and it had turned up blanks. I began first to pity, and then to despise him—for frae a fish o' his appearance I expeckit that nae ack o' his life wad hae sae graced him as the closin ane—and I was pairtly wae and pairtly wrathfu' to see him *dee saft!* Yet, to do him justice, it's no impossible but that he may hae druv his snout again' a stane, and got dazed—and we a' ken by experience that there's naething mair likely to calm courage than a brainin knock on the head. His organ o' locality had gotten a clour, for he lost a' judgment atween wat and dry, and came floatin, belly upmost, in amang the bit snail-bucky-shells on the sand around my feet, and lay there as still as if he had been gutted on the kitchen-dresser—an enormous fish.

North. A sumph.

Shepherd. No sic a sumph as he looked like — and that you'll think when you hear tell o' the lave o' the adventure. Bein' rather out o' wund, I sits doun on a stane, and was wipin ma broos, wi' ma een fixed upon the prey, when a' on a sudden, as if he had been galvaneesed, he stotted up intil the lift, and wi' ae squash played plunge into the pool, and awa doun the eddies like a porpus. I thocht I should hae gane mad, Heaven forgie me—and I fear I swore like a trooper. Loupin wi' a spang frae the stane, I missed ma feet, and gaed head-ower-heels intil the water—while amang the rushin o' the element I heard roars o' lauchter as if frae the kelpie himsel, but what afterwards turned out to be guffaws frae your friens Boyd and Juniper Bank,[1] wha had been wutnessin the drama frae commencement to catastrophe.

North. Ha! ha! ha! James! it must have been excessively droll.

[1] Messrs Boyd of Innerleithen, and Thorburn of Juniper Bank, a farm on Tweedside.

Shepherd. Risin to the surface wi' a guller, I shook ma nieve at the neerdoweels, and then doun the river after the sumph o' a saumon, like a verra otter. Followin noo the sicht and noo the scent, I wasna lang in comin up wi' him —for he was as deid as Dawvid—and lyin on his back, I protest, just like a man restin himsel at the soomin. I had forgotten the gaff—so I fastened ma teeth intil the shouther o' him—and like a Newfoundlan' savin a chiel frae droonin, I bare him to the shore, while, to do Boyd and Juniper justice, the lift rang wi' acclamations.

North. What may have been his calibre?

Shepherd. On puttin him intil the scales at nicht, he just turned three stane tron.

Tickler (*stretching himself out to an incredible extent*). Alas! 'twas but a dream!

Shepherd. Was ye dreamin, sir, o' bein' hanged?

Tickler (*recovering his first position*). Eh!

North. "So started up in his own shape The Fiend." We have been talking, Timothy, of Shakespeare's *Seven Ages.*

Tickler. Shakespeare's *Seven Ages!*

Shepherd. No Seven Ages — but rather seven characters. Ye dinna mean to mainteen, that every man, afore he dees, maun be a sodger and a justice o' the peace?

Tickler. Shepherd *versus* Shakespeare—Yarrow *versus* Avon.

Shepherd. I see no reason why me, or ony ither man o' genius, michtna write just as weel's Shakspeer. Arena we a' mortal? Mony glorious glints he has, and surpassin sunbursts—but oh! sirs, his plays are desperate fu' o' trash—like some o' ma earlier poems——

Tickler. The *Queen's Wake* is a faultless production.

Shepherd. It's nae sic thing. But it's nearly about as perfeck as ony work o' human genius; whereas Shakspeer's best plays, sic as *Hamlet*, *Lear*, and *Othello*, are but strang daubs——

Tickler. James——

Shepherd. Are they no, Mr North?

North. Rather so, my dear Shepherd. But what of his *Seven Ages?*

Shepherd. Nothing—except that they're very poor. What's the first?

North.— "At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in its nurse's arms!"

Shepherd. An' that's a' that Shakspeer had to say about man an infant! I prefer the pictur o' young Hector, frichtened at his father's crest—though, I dinna dout that Asteeanax was gien to mewlin and pukin in his nurse's arms, too, like ither weans afore they're speaned, for milk certainly curdles and gets sour on their stamacks——

North. Why, James, in the Ninth Book of the *Iliad*, old Phœnix, who was private tutor to Achilles when a younker, reminds that hero how he used to disgorge the wine on his vest.

Shepherd. Wha's vest? Phœnix's, or that o' the callant Achilles himsel?

North. Phœnix's.

Shepherd. I hae naething to say about that—for the propriety or impropriety o' the allusion 'ill depend altogether on the place and time it is introduced, although I must just say, that there's nae settin boun's to the natural drivel o' dotage in a fond auld man. But Shakspeer, frae a' the attributes, and character, and conduct o' infants, had to choose them he thocht best suited for a general picture o' that age, and the nasty coof chose mewlin and pukin——

Tickler. I remember once seeing a natural actor in a barn, who personated the melancholy Jacques to admiration, suiting the action to the words, and at "puking"——

Shepherd. Throwin up on the stage! It's a lee-like story.

Tickler. He merely made a face and a gulp, as if disordered in his stomach.

Shepherd. That was a' richt;—sae did John Kemble.

North. What would Mr James Ballantyne say were he to hear that assertion?

Shepherd. I dinna care what he would say, though I grant he's a capital theatrical critic, and writes a hantle better on a play-bill than on the Bill o' Reform.

North. Unsay these words this instant, James, for there was a tacit agreement that we were to have no politics.

Shepherd. "What's writ is writ," quoth Byron. "What's said is said," quoth Hogg. I'll cat in my words for nae man—but back again to John Kemble actin the babby. He pronounced the word "mewlin," wi' a sort o' a mew like that o' a wean or a kittlin, shuin his arms up and doun as if nursin; and if that was richt, then I mainteen that it was incumbent

on him, in common consistency, to have gien us the "pukin" too, or, at a' events, the sort o' face and gulp the playactor made in the barn—for what reason in the nature o' things, or the art o' actin, could there possibly be for stoppin short at the "mewin?"

North. But, my dear James, the question is not about John Kemble, but William Shakespeare.

Shepherd. Weel then, the verra first squeak or skirl o' a newborn wean in the house, that, though little louder nor that o' a rotten, fills the entire tenement frae grun'-wark to riggin, was far better for the purposes o' poetry than the mewlin and pukin — for besides bein' onything but disgustfu', though sometimes, I alloo, as alarmin as unexpected, it is the sound the young Roscius utters on his first appearance on any stage; and on that latter account, if on nae ither, should hae been seleckit by Shakspeer.

North. Ingenious, James.

Shepherd. Or the moment when it is first pitten,[1] trig as a bit burdie, intil its father's arms.

Tickler. A man child—the imp.

Shepherd. Though noo sax feet fowre, you were then, yoursel, Tickler, but a span lang — little mair nor the length o' your present nose.

Tickler. 'Twas a snub.

Shepherd. As weel tell me that a pawrot, when it chips the shell, has a strecht neb.

Tickler. Or that a hog does not show the cloven foot till he has learnt to grunt.

Shepherd. Neither he does—for he grunts the instant he's farrowed — like ony Christian — sae you're out again, there, and that envenomed shaft o' satire fa's to the grun'.

North. No bad blood, gents!

Shepherd. Weel then — or, when yet unchristened, it lies awake in the creddle—and as its wee dim een meet yours, as you're lookin doun to kiss't, there comes strangely ower its bit fair face a something joyfu', that love construes intil a smile.

Tickler. "Beautiful exceedingly." Hem.

Shepherd. Or, for the first time o' its life in lang-claes, held up in the hush o' the kirk, to be bapteesed—while——

[1] *Pitten*—put.

Tickler. The moment the water touches its face, it falls into a fit o' fear and rage——

Shepherd. Sune stilled, ye callous carle, in the bosom o' ane o' the bonny lassies sittin on a furm in the transe, a' dressed in white, wha wi' mony a silent hushaby, lulls the lamb, noo ane o' the flock, into haly sleep.

Tickler. Your hand, my dear James.

Shepherd. There. Tak a gude grup, sir, for in spite o' that sneering, you've a real gude heart.

North. This is the second or third time, my dear James, that we have been cheated by some chance or other out of your Seven Ages. But hark! the time-piece strikes nine—and we must away to the Library. Two hours for dinner in the Saloon—two for wine and walnuts in the Snuggery—then two for tea-tea, and coffee-tea in the Library—and finally, two in the blue-parlour for supper. Such was the arrangement for the evening. So lend me your support, my dear boys—we shall leave our curricles behind us—and start pedestrians. I am the lad to show a toe. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.—The Library. Tea, coffee, chocolate, &c. Enter the Trio on foot—North *in medio tutissimus.* Shepherd *President of the Pots.*

Shepherd. Wha drinks tea, wha drinks coffee, and wha drinks chocklat?

Tickler. I carena with which I commence—so that I end with a cup of congou and therein a caulker.

North. I feel the influence of the Genius Loci, and long for some literary conversation. How quickly, James, is the character of a book known to——

Shepherd. Veterans like us in the fields o' literature. It's just the same to the experienced wi' the character o' a man or a woman. In five minutes the likes o' you and me see through their faces intil their hearts. Twa-three words, if they should be but about the weather, the sound o' the vice itsel, a certain look about the een, their way o' walkin, the mainner they draw in a chair, ony the meerest trifle in short, maks us acquented wi' the inner man, in ilka sex alike, as weel as if we had kent them for a thousand years. An' is't no preceesely ane and the same thing wi' byucks? Open a poem at ony

pairt, and let the ee rin doun the line o' prent atween the margins, and you haena glanced alang a page till ye ken whether or no the owther be a free and accepted mason amang the Muses. No that you may hae seen ony verra uncommon eemage, or extraordinar thocht, for the lad in that particular passage may hae been haudin the even tenor o' his way alang an easy level; but still you fin' as if your feet werena on the beaten road, but on the bonny greensward, wi' here and there a pretty unpresuming wild-flower, primrose, daisy, or violet, and that you're gettin in amang the mazes o' the pleasant sheep-paths on the braes.

North. Or the sumph is seen in a single sentence——

Shepherd. And the amiable man o' mediocrity is apparent at the full pint o' the first paragraph.

Tickler. A compendious canon in criticism.

Shepherd. And ane that I never kent err. No but that ye may hate a man or woman at first sicht, and afterwards come to regard *him* wi' muckle amity, and gang mad for *her* in verra infatuation—but then in a' sic cases they hae been inconsistent and contradictory characters; fierce fallows ae day, sulky chiels anither—on a third, to your astonishment, free and familiar—on a fourth flatterin—freenly on a fifth—comical and wutty beyond a' endurance on a sixth—on the seventh, for that's the Sabbath, serious and solemn, as is fittin a' mortal beings to be on the haly day o' rest—and on Monday nicht, they break and burst out on ye diamonds o' the first water, some rouch, and some polished, as ye get glorious thegither in the feast o' reason and the flow o' sowl, ower a barrel o' cisters and a gallon o' Glenlivet.

North. Heads of chapters for the Natural History of Friendship.

Shepherd. Sic too is sometimes the origin and growth o' Love. The first time ye saw her, cockettin perhaps wi' some insignificant puppy, and either seemin no to ken that you're in the room, or geein you occasionally a supercilious glance frae the curled tail o' her ee, as if she thocht you had mistaken the parlour for the servants'-ha', ye pairtly pity, pairtly despise, and rather hate, and think her mair nor ordinary ugly; neist time ye forgather, she's sittin on a bunker[1] by her lane, and drappin doun aside her, you attempt to talk, but she looks strecht-forrit, as if ex-

[1] *Bunker*—window-seat.

pectin the door to open, and seems stane-deaf, at least on ae side o' the head, only she's no sulky, and about her mouth ye see a sort o' a struggle to haud in a smile, that makes her look, though—somewhat prim, certainly—rather bonny; on the third meetin, at a freen's house, you sit aside her at denner, and try to fin' out the things she likes best, nor mind a rebuff or twa, till ye get first a sole on her plate, and syne a veal cutlet, and after that the breist o' a chicken, and feenally, an apple-tart wi' custard; and sae muckle the better, if afore that a jeely and a bit blamange, takin tent to ask her to drink wine wi' you, and even facetiously pretendin to gie her a caulker, wi' an expression that shows you're thinking o' far ither dew atween the openin o' her lips, that noo, for the first time can be fairly said to lauch alang wi' the licht that seems safter and safter in her heaven-blue een; the morning after of coorse you gie her a ca', and you fin' her at the work-table, in a gauze goun and braided hair, wi' her wee fit on a stool, peepin out like a moose—tak her on the whole, as she sits, as lovely-lookin a lassie as a Shepherd may see on a simmer's day—and what's your delicht, when layin aside her work, a purple silk-purse interwoven wi' gold, she rises a' at ance like some bricht bird frae the grund, and comes floating towards ye wi' an outstretched arm, terminating in a haun o' which the back and the fingers are white as the driven snaw! And as for the pawm—if a sweet shock o' electricity gangs na to your heart as you touch it, then either are your nerves non-conductors, or you're a chiel chiseled out o' the whinstane rock. Your fifth meetin, we shall say, is a' by chance, though in a lane a mile ayont the sooburbs, that was ance the avenue to a ha' noo dilapidated, and that is shaded in its solitariness wi' a hummin arch o' umbrawgeous auld lime-trees. Hoo sweet the unexpected recognition! For there was nae tryst—for, believe me, there was nae tryst—I was takin a poetical dauner awa frae the smoky city's stir, and she, like an angel o' charity, was returnin frae a puir widow's hovel, where she had been drappin, as if frae heaven, her weekly alms. The sixth time you see her —for you hae keepit count o' every ane, and they're a' written on your heart—is on the Saturday nicht in the house o' her ain parents, nane at hame but themsels—a family party—and the front-door locked again' a' intruders, that may ring the bell as they like; for entrance is there nane, except through

the keyhole to the domestic fairies. What'n a wife, thinks your heart, would be sic a dochter! What'n a mother to the weans! The sweet thocht, but half-suppressed, accompanies her, as she moves about through the room, in footsteps Fine-ear himsel could hardly hear; and showerin aroun' her the cheerfu' beauty o' her innocence,

> "Sic as virtue ever wears
> When gay good-nature dresses her in smiles!"

Hark! at a look frae her father the virgin sings! An auld Scottish sang—and then a hymn—but whilk is the maist haly it would be hard to tell, for if the hymn be fu' o' a humble and a contrite heart, sae is the sang o' a heart overflowing wi' ruth and pity, and in its ain happiness tenderly alive to a' human grief! The seventh meetin's at the kirk on the Sabbath—and we sit thegither in the same pew, havin walked a' by our lanes across the silent braes; and never never in this warld can love be love, until the twa mortal creatures, wha may hae pledged their troth in voiceless promises, hae assurance gien them, as they join in prayer within the House o' God, that it is hallowed by Religion.

North. My dear James! happy for ever be your hearth.

Shepherd. Bless you, sir. But let's be crouse as weel's canty.[1] That's rich chocklat.

North.—

> "And thus I won my Genevieve,
> My bright and beauteous bride!"

Tickler. And call you that, James, literary conversation!

Shepherd. Hoots—I'm no sure, gentlemen, if an age is the better o' bein' especially characterised by an inclination for literatur.

North. Nor am I. Among the pleasures and pursuits of our ordinary life, there are none which take stronger hold on minds of intelligence and sensibility than those of literature; nor is it possible to look without pleasure and approbation upon the application of a young ingenuous mind to such avocations. Yet a suspicion will often steal in among such reflections, that there is some secret peril lurking in this path

[1] *Canty*—bold, as well as cheerful.

of flowers, which may make it necessary for the mind in the midst of its delights to be jealous of its safety.

Shepherd. You're no gaun to thraw cauld water, sir, on Poetry?

North. Hear me out, my dear James. Literature brings back to the mind, in a kind of softened reflection, those emotions which belong in nature to the agitating scenes of reality. From the storms of society—from the agony of forlorn hope—from the might of heroism—from the transport of all passions—there is brought to us in our own still seclusion the image of life; our intelligence and sensibility are awakened, and with delight and admiration, with a shadowy representation to ourselves of that which has been absolutely acted, we consider the imaginary world.

Shepherd. Nae harm sure in that, sir.

North. Love, and hope, and fear, and sorrow, shadowy resemblances of great passions, pass through our hearts; and in the secret haunts of imagination we indulge in contemplating for our mere pleasure that which has consumed the strength and the whole being of our kind. We sever ourselves for a moment from the world to become sympathising and applauding spectators of that very drama in which our own part awaits us. We turn the dread reality of existence into a show for indolent delight.

Shepherd. That's beautifu' langage, sir.

North. Indeed we can scarcely describe, James, the pleasures which our imagination seeks in works of literature, without indicating the twofold and various tendency of its pleasures. As the image of our condition warms our heart towards our kind, as it enlarges our conception of our own or their nature, it tends, by raising our minds, to fit us more nobly for the discharge of its duties. But as it gives us without reality the emotions we need,—as it indulges the sensibility which it is flattering to ourselves to feel,—as it separates for our gratification the grandeur of heroic strength from its endurance,—and gives us the consciousness of all that is good in our own nature, without the pain or peril which puts its strength to the proof,—it tends to soothe and beguile us with illusory complacency in our own virtue,—to sever our spirits from that hard and fearful strife, in which alone we ought to think that we can rightly know ourselves—

and therewithal it tends in the effect to sever us from our kind, to whom it seems, nevertheless, to unite us in our dreams and visions.

Shepherd. Listenin to you, sir, is like lookin into a well: at first ye think it clear, but no verra deep; but ye let drap in a peeble, and what a length of time ere the air-bells come up to the surface frae the profoond!

North. To the young mind, therefore, James, the indulgence in the pleasures which imagination finds in the silent companionship of books, may be regarded as often very dangerous. It is unconsciously training itself to a separation from men during the very years which should train it to the performance of the work in which it must mingle with them. It is learning to withdraw itself from men, to retire into itself, to love and prefer itself, to be its own delight and its own world. And yet a course meanwhile awaits it, in which the greater part of time, strength, thought, desire, must be given up to avocations which demand it from itself to others; in which it must forego its own delight, or rather must find its delight in service which abstracts it from itself wholly, and chains it to this weary world.

Shepherd. True as holy writ.

North. Life allows only lowly virtue. Its discipline requires of us the humblest pleasures and the humblest service; and only from these by degrees does it permit us to ascend to great emotions and high duties. It is a perpetual denial to ambition and requital of humility.

Shepherd. For mony a lang year did I feel that, sir. An' I'll continue to feel't to the hour I close my een on sun, moon, and stars.

North. But imagination is ambitious, and not humble. It leaps at once to the highest, and forms us to overlook the humble possibilities, and to scorn the lowly service of earth. Not measuring ourselves with reality, we grow giants in imagination; but the dreamed giant has vanished with the first sun-ray that strikes on our eyes and awakes us.

Shepherd. Yet wha will say that the pleasures o' imagination are to be withheld frae youth?

North. They cannot be withheld, James, for the spirit is full of imagination, and has power within itself for its own delusion. But bad education may withhold from imagination

the nobler objects of its delight, and leave it fettered to life, a spirit of power, struggling and consuming itself in vain efforts.

Shepherd. What, then, in plain words, is the *bona-feedy* truth o' the subjeck?

North. I conceive that it is the habitual indulgence that is injurious, and not the knowledge by imagination of its greatest objects; and I should conceive that if we are to do anything with reference to imagination, it should be, as the years of youth rise upon the mind, to connect its pleasure with the severest action of intellect, by never offering to the mind in books the unrestrained wild delight of imagination; but indulging to it the consciousness of that faculty only in the midst of true and philosophical knowledge.

Shepherd. In science, art, history, men, and nature. Eh?

North. The pleasures of literature are thought to make the mind effeminate, which they do, inasmuch as the cultivation of letters is at variance with the service of life. The service of life strengthens the mind, by calling upon it always to labour for a present or definite purpose,—to submit its desires, its pleasures, rigidly to an object. It does not deny pleasure—it yields it; but only in subordination or subservience to a purpose. It requires and teaches it to frame its whole action by its will, and to become master of itself. And whether the purposes of life are good and honourable, or debasing, it has this effect of strengthening the mind for action. It is the part of imagination to raise the mind, and to nourish its sensibility; but it must not be allowed to unnerve and disorder its force of action.

Shepherd. You're beginning to talk like the Pedlar in *The Excursion.*

North. I do not know that you could pay me a higher compliment, James.

Shepherd. Darkenin counsel wi' the multiplication o' vain words. A' the great moral philosophical writers that I hae read, baith in prose and in verse, are in expression simple, and say, in fact, far mair than they seem to do; whereas Wordsworth amaist aye, and no unfrequently yoursel, are ower gorgeous in your apparel, and say, in fact, less than you seem to do, though it's but seldom you dinna baith utter, even amang your vapidest verbosity, a gey hantle o' invaluable truth.

Tickler. Let us exchange such indefinite generalities for a few pointed particulars, if you please; else, depend on't, Fancy will be falling asleep.—What is your opinion, North, of Croker's Edition of *Boswell's Johnson?*

North. The same—generally—as that of the *Westminster* Reviewer.

Tickler. Ay! And pray what is that?

North. That it is the best variorum edition since the revival of letters.

Tickler. Croker is certainly one of the cleverest and acutest of living men.

Shepherd. No unlike yourself, sir, I jalouse.

North. He is—and much more. He is a man of great abilities, and an admirable scholar. But he is much more than that—he is a political writer of the highest order, as many of his essays in the *Quarterly Review* prove—which are full of the Philosophy of History.

Tickler. Pray, what have you got to say of the charges brought against him, in the last number of the Blue and Yellow, of pitiable imbecility and scandalous ignorance?

North. James, have the goodness to hand me over the seven volumes lying yonder on the small table.

Shepherd. Yon in the east nyuck? There. And here's the Blue and Yellow sittin on the tap o' them like an Incubus.

North. Having paid some little attention to the literary history of the period to which they refer, perhaps I may be able to amuse you for half-an-hour by an exposure of some of the *betises* of this prick-ma-dainty[1] Reviewer.

Shepherd. Prick-ma-denty—that's ane o' ma words. I've been alloo'd the length o' my tether the nicht on ither topics—and shall be glad noo to listen to you and Mr Tickler.

North. Of course I cannot now go over the whole of the Reviewer's ten pages of conceited and calumnious cavilling, but must restrict myself to specimens.

Shepherd. Ay—on with the specks. Oh! Tickler! doesna he look awfu' gleg?

North. The Reviewer says:—"In one place we are told that Allan Ramsay the painter was born in 1709, and died in 1784; in another, that he died in 1784, in the seventy-first year of

[1] *Prick-ma-dainty*—finical, ridiculously exact.

his age. If the latter statement be correct, he must have been born in or about 1713."

Shepherd. Hoo's that, sir? That maun be a blunder o' Croker's.

North. No, James; it is but a dishonest trick of his Reviewer. The age is stated differently in the two notes; but one note is Mr Croker's, and one is Mr Boswell's. Mr Boswell states colloquially that "Allan Ramsay died in 1784, in his seventy-first year;" Mr Croker states, with more precision, that "he was born in 1709; and died in 1784," and Mr Croker is right—see, if you choose, "Biographical Dictionary," *voce* Ramsay—and thus, because Mr Croker corrects an error, the Reviewer accuses him of making one.

Shepherd. Puppy!

North. Tickler, lend me your ears. The Reviewer says, "Mr Croker says, that at the commencement of the INTIMACY between Dr Johnson and Mrs Thrale, IN 1765, the lady was twenty-five years old."

Shepherd. Wha the deevil cares hoo auld she was?

Tickler. Well, North, what then?

North. Why, Mr Croker says no such thing. He says, "Mrs Thrale was twenty-five years of age when the *acquaintance* commenced," but *he* does not say *when* it commenced, nor when it became *intimacy*. It is *Mr Boswell* who states, that in 1765 Mr Johnson was introduced into the family of Mrs Thrale; but in the very next page, we find Mrs Thrale herself stating that the *acquaintance* began in 1764, and the more strict intimacy might be dated from 1766. So that the discrepancy of two or three years which, by a *double falsification* of Mr Croker's words, the Reviewer attributes to him, belongs really to Mr Boswell and Mrs Thrale themselves!

Tickler. Proceed. I was prepared for misrepresentation.

North. The Reviewer adds—"In another place he says that Mrs Thrale's thirty-fifth year coincided with Johnson's seventieth. Johnson was born in 1709; if, therefore, Mrs Thrale's thirty-fifth coincided with Johnson's seventieth, she could have been but twenty-one years old in 1765." Now, I find, James——

Shepherd. Address yoursel to Tickler.

North. I find, Tickler, that Mr Croker states, that from a passage in one of Johnson's letters, "*he suspects*," and "it may

be *surmised*," that Mrs Thrale's thirty-fifth and Johnson's seventieth years coincided. The Reviewer says, that "the reasons given by Mr Croker for this notion are utterly frivolous." I shall look to *that* instantly; but is it not an absolute misrepresentation to call an opinion, advanced in the cautious terms of *surmise* and *suspicion*, as a *statement* of a fact?

Tickler. Gross.

North. The creature continues—"But this is not all: Mr Croker in another place assigns the year 1777 as the date of the complimentary lines which Johnson made on Mrs Thrale's thirty-fifth birthday. If this date be correct, Mrs Thrale must have been born in 1742, and could have been only twenty-three when her acquaintance with Johnson commenced."

Shepherd. What the deevil can be the meanin o' a this bairnly batheration about the age o' Mrs Thrawl, that is, Peeosy?[1]

Tickler. Literary history, James.

North. Exposure of a small malignant, James. I observe, my dear Timothy, that Mr Croker does no such thing. He inserted, I presume, the lines under the year 1777, because he must needs place them somewhere; and, in the doubt of two or three years, which, as I have already shown, may exist between Mr Boswell's account and Mrs Thrale's own, he placed them under 1777; but, so far from positively assigning them to that particular year, he cautiously premises, "*It was about this time* that these verses were written;" and he distinctly states, in two other notes, that he *doubts* whether that was the precise date. Here again, therefore, his Reviewer is dishonest.

Shepherd. The man that 'ill tell ae lee will tell twunty.

North. The critic adds, "Two of Mr Croker's three statements must be false." But I add, Mr Croker has made but *one statement*, and *that is not impugned;* the two discrepancies belong to Mr Boswell and Mrs Thrale, and the falsehood to the Reviewer.

Shepherd. Sherp words.

North. The critic then claps his wings and crows. "We will not decide between them; we will only say, that the reasons he gives for thinking that Mrs Thrale was exactly

[1] After the death of her first husband, Mrs Thrale married Signor Piozzi, an Italian music-master.

thirty-five years old when Johnson was seventy, appear to us utterly frivolous."

Tickler. What are they?

North. Mr Croker's reason is this: Mrs Thrale had offended Johnson, by supposing him to be seventy-two when he was only seventy. Of this Johnson complains, at first, somewhat seriously, but he then gaily adds, "If you try to plague me (*on the subject of age*), I shall tell you that life begins to decline at thirty-five." Mr Croker's note upon this passage, which the Reviewer has misrepresented as an *assertion*, is, "It may be *surmised* that Mrs Thrale at her last birthday was thirty-five." Surmise appears to me too dubious an expression. The meaning seems indisputable.

Tickler. Why, if Mr Croker has not hit the point of Johnson's retort, what is it?

North. The deponent sayeth not.

Tickler. Any more of the same sort of peevish impotence?

North. Lots. Thus—"Mr Croker informs his readers, that Lord Mansfield survived Johnson full ten years. Lord Mansfield survived Dr Johnson just eight years and a quarter."

Shepherd. What a wonnerfu' clever fallow, to be able to mak siccan a correction o' a date! Does onything depend on't?

North. Nothing. But the Reviewer is right. Doctor Johnson died in 1784, and Lord Mansfield in 1793. But the occasion on which Mr Croker used the inaccurate colloquial phrase of *full ten years*, makes the inaccuracy of no consequence at all. He is noticing an anecdote of a gentleman's having stated that he called on Dr Johnson soon after Lord Mansfield's death, and that Johnson said, "Ah, sir, *there* was little learning, and less virtue." This cruel anecdote Mr Croker's natural indignation refutes from his general recollection, and, without waiting to consult the printed obituaries, he exclaims, "It cannot be true, for Lord Mansfield survived Johnson *full ten years!*" whereas he ought to have said, "It cannot be true, because Lord Mansfield survived Johnson 'eight years and three months;'" or, what would have been still more accurate, "eight years, three months, and seven days!"

Shepherd. What a bairn!

Tickler. A sumph, James.

Shepherd. A sumph, indeed, Timothy.

North. And something worse. Listen. "Mr Croker tells us that the great Marquess of Montrose was beheaded at Edinburgh in 1650. There is not a forward boy at any school in England, who does not know that the Marquess was *hanged.* The account of the execution is one of the finest passages in Lord Clarendon's History. We can scarcely suppose that Mr Croker has never read the passage, and yet we can scarcely suppose that any one who has ever perused so noble and pathetic a story, can have utterly forgotten all its most striking circumstances."

Shepherd. I never read Clarendon; but for a' that, I ken weel the details o' the dismal story; they're weel gien by my frien' Robert Chambers.

North. Beg your pardon, James, for a moment. I really almost suspect that the Reviewer has not read the passage to which he refers, or he could hardly have accused Mr Croker of showing—by having said that Montrose was *beheaded*, when the Reviewer thinks he should have said *hanged*—that he had forgotten the most "*striking passage*" of Clarendon's noble "account of the execution." It is not on the *execution* itself that Lord Clarendon dwells with the most pathos and effect, but on the previous indignities at and after his trial, which Montrose so magnanimously endured. Clarendon, with scrupulous delicacy, avoids all mention of the peculiar mode of death, and is wholly silent as to any of the horrible circumstances that attended it, leaving the reader's imagination to supply, from the terms of the sentence, the odious details; but the Reviewer, if he had really known or felt the true pathos of the story, would have remembered that the sentence was, that the Marquess should be *hanged and beheaded*, and that his head should "be stuck on the Tolbooth of Edinburgh;" and it was this very circumstance of the *beheading*, which excited in Montrose that burst of eloquence which is the *most striking* beauty of the whole of the "noble and pathetic story." "I am prouder," said he to his persecutors, "to have *my head* set upon the place it is appointed to be, than I should be to have my picture hung in the King's bedchamber!" And this was the incident which the Reviewer imagines that Mr Croker may have forgotten, because he does not tell us drily that Montrose was *hanged.*[1]

[1] North's remarks about Montrose have been inserted by Mr Croker in the reprints of his edition of *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, p. 367.

Shepherd. Sma' sma' spite! Mr Croker would scorn to craw ower sic an impident bantam.

North. You know well the story of Byng, Tickler?

Tickler. I do.

North. So does Mr Croker; but the Reviewer thinks not, as you shall now hear. "Nothing," says Mr Croker, "can be more unfounded than the assertion that Byng fell a martyr to political party. By a strange coincidence of circumstances, it happened that there was a total change of administration between his condemnation and death, so that one party presided at his trial, and another at his execution.[1] There can be no stronger proof that he was not a political martyr." On this passage, the Reviewer says, — "Now, what will our readers think of this writer, when we assure them that this statement, so confidently made respecting events so notorious, is absolutely untrue? One and the same administration was in office when the court-martial on Byng commenced its sittings, through the whole trial, at the condemnation, and at the execution. In the month of November 1756, the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Hardwicke resigned; the Duke of Devonshire became First Lord of the Treasury, and Mr Pitt Secretary of State. This administration lasted till the month of April 1757. Byng's court-martial began to sit on the 28th of December 1756. He was shot on the 14th March 1757. There is something at once diverting and provoking in the cool and authoritative manner in which Mr Croker makes these random assertions."

Tickler. Enlighten my weak mind, sir, on these conflicting statements.

Shepherd. Confoun' a questions o' dates!

North. Now, what do you think, sir, when I assure you, that this contradiction to Mr Croker, "so confidently made with respect to events so notorious," is absolutely untrue! But so it is. The Reviewer catches at what may be a verbal inaccuracy (I doubt whether it be one, but at worst it is no more), and is himself guilty of the most direct and substantial

[1] In the subsequent reprints this sentence stands as follows: "By a strange coincidence of circumstances, it happened that there was a total change of Ministry between *the accusation and the sentence;* so that one party *prepared the trial and the other directed the execution.*" If Mr Croker had originally stated the case in this way there would have been no ground for Mr Macaulay's objection, and no necessity for Mr North's vindication.

falsehood. Of all the audacities of which this Reviewer has been guilty, this is the greatest, not merely because it is the most important as an historical question, but because it is an instance of—to use his own expression—"the most *scandalous inaccuracy*."

Shepherd. Ma head's confused. What's the question?

North. The question between Mr Croker and the Reviewer is this—whether *one* Ministry did not *prosecute* Byng, and a *succeeding* Ministry *execute* him. Mr Croker says ay—the Reviewer says no. I declare that the ayes have it.

Tickler. As how?

North. Byng's action was in May 1756, at which time the Duke of Newcastle was Minister, and Mr Pitt and Lord Temple in violent opposition; and when the account of the action arrived in England, "the Ministers," (I quote from Campbell's *Lives of the Admirals*—here it is)—"the *Ministers* determined to turn, if possible, the popular clamour and indignation from *themselves*, upon the Admiral." And again, "the hired writers in the pay of the *Ministry*, were set to work to censure his conduct in the most violent and inflammatory manner;" and it is then called "a nefarious business." And again, "The popular clamour and indignation were so extremely violent that *Ministers* were under the necessity of making known *their intention to try Byng*, in a singular, unprecedented, and not very decorous or fair manner. Orders were sent to all the out-ports to put him on his arrival into close arrest. The facts seem to have been, that *Ministers* had roused the public to such a state of irritation, that it would be directed against themselves, unless *they proceeded against Byng in the most rigorous manner*."

Shepherd. I like to hear the readin o' dockiments.

North. On the *26th July*, Byng arrived at Portsmouth, and was committed to *close custody*, and removed thence "to Greenwich, where he was to remain till his trial, and where he was guarded, as if he had been guilty of the most heinous crimes. The part of the hospital in which he was confined was most scrupulously and carefully fortified; and what marked most decidedly the feeling of the *Ministers*, they took care that all these precautions should be made known."

Tickler. In short, if we are to believe the writers of the day, and, above all, Byng's own friends and advocates, the

Ministers had already condemned him, and had predestined him to execution to save themselves.

North. Just so. "The Ministers," says Charnock (*Naval Biog.*, vol. iv. p. 159), "treated him like a criminal *already condemned.*" The resolution to *try* Byng was, as I have shown you, taken at least as early as July; but the absence of witnesses, and other formalities, delayed the actual assembling the court-martial for some months, during which the controversy between the partisans of Byng and those of the Ministry was maintained with the greatest rancour and animosity. In these circumstances, and while Byng was on the brink of his trial, about the 20th November 1756, his inveterate enemies, the Ministers, resigned, and a total change of administration took place The new administration, however, resolved to execute the instructions of the former—the proceedings instituted against Byng by the Duke of Newcastle's administration, were followed up by Mr Pitt's; and the imprisonment of Byng, which was ordered by Lord Anson, was terminated by his execution, the warrant for which was signed by Lord Semple, six months after!

Tickler. Poz?

North. Ay, poz. Now, if Mr Croker had been writing history, or even a review, he probably might not have said that "the change of Ministers took place between the *condemnation* and death," if by *condemnation* the actual *sentence* of the court were to be understood. Certainly the actual trial happened to be held a few days after the accession of the new Ministry; but the prosecution, and the alleged persecution, the *official condemnation* of Byng, and the indictment, if I may borrow the common law expression, and the collection of the evidence in support of it, and every step preparatory to the actual swearing of the court, were all perpetrated under the auspices of the old Ministry. The new Ministry had no real share nor responsibility in the transaction, till after the sentence was pronounced, and then (without, as it would seem, any hesitation on their part, though delays from other causes arose), *they* executed the sentence.

Tickler. Thank you, sir. After that, nobody can have any doubt in deciding which speaks the historic truth—he, to be sure, who says that one set of Ministers conducted the prosecution, and the *other* ordered the execution.

North. Is the editor of the *Life of Johnson*, or the *Edinburgh* Reviewer "*scandalously inaccurate?*"

Tickler. The prig.

North. The truth seems to be, that the Reviewer knows nothing more of the history of the transaction than its *dates*—the *skeleton of history;* and because he saw in some chronological work that Mr Pitt became Minister some days before the court-martial upon Byng was opened, he imagined that Mr Pitt's Ministry were the responsible prosecutors in that court-martial. Mr Croker on this occasion, as on many others, has looked to the *spirit* of the proceeding, as well as the *letter*—to the *design* as well as the *date*—and has contributed to trace historic truth by the motives and causes of events, rather than by the day of the month on which the event happens to explode.

Tickler. The justification and refutation are complete.

Shepherd. At him again, sir.

North. Don't be impatient, James. The critic says chucklingly, "But we must proceed. These volumes contain mistakes more gross, if possible, than any that we have yet mentioned. Boswell has recorded some observations made by Johnson on the changes which took place in Gibbon's religious opinions. 'It is said,' cried the Doctor, laughing, 'that he has been a Mahommedan.' 'This sarcasm,' says the editor, 'probably alludes to the tenderness with which Gibbon's malevolence to Christianity induced him to treat Mahommedanism in his history.' Now the sarcasm was uttered in 1776; and that part of the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* which relates to Mahommedanism was not published till 1788, twelve years after the date of this conversation, and nearly four years after the death of Johnson."

Tickler. What, does the Reviewer doubt that Mr Croker is right, and that Gibbon was the person intended?

North. Certainly not. He adopts, without acknowledgment, Mr Croker's interpretation, but then turns round and says, "You have given a bad reason for a just conclusion." Then why does the Reviewer not give a better, and state why he adopts Mr Croker's opinion, if he is not satisfied with Mr Croker's reason? The fact is, the poor creature is at his *skeleton* work again. He found that the origin of Mahommedanism,

which sprung up about the year 600, could not be chronologically included in the first volume of Gibbon, which ends about the year 300. And he kindly informs Mr Croker that Gibbon's account of Mahommedanism was not published till after Johnson's death; but he chooses to forget, that in every page of his *first* volume, as of his last, Gibbon takes or makes opportunities of sneering at, and depreciating Christianity; while, on the other hand, he shows everywhere remarkable "tenderness" for Paganism and Mahommedanism.

Tickler. These insinuations and innuendos are to be found all through the work, and are indeed the great peculiarity of his style.

North. It is evident, too, from the concluding part of Mr Croker's note, *which the Reviewer has suppressed*, that this was his meaning; for Mr Croker adds, "*something of this sort* must have been in Johnson's mind on this occasion."

Tickler. He says so—does he?

North. Yes. If Mr Croker had meant to allude to the *professed* history of Mahommedanism, published in Gibbon's latter volumes—he could not have spoken dubiously about it, as "*something of this sort*," for *there* the bias is clear and certain. It is therefore evident that Mr Croker meant to allude to Gibbon's numerous insinuations against Christianity in the first volumes, and if Johnson did *not* mean "*something of this sort*," I wish the Reviewer would tell us what he meant.

Tickler. Convicted.[1]

Shepherd. It's sometimes no unpleasant to listen to discussion ane but verra imperfeckly understaun's—especially ower sic tipple. Somebody's gettin his licks.

North. James—read aloud, in your best manner, that passage.

[1] On this point Mr Macaulay is entitled to be heard. He says, "A defence of this blunder [Croker's about Gibbon] was attempted [in *Blackwood's Magazine.*] That the celebrated chapters in which Gibbon has traced the progress of Mahommedanism were not written in 1776, could not be denied. But it was confidently asserted that his partiality to Mahommedanism appeared in his first volume. This assertion is untrue. No passage, which can by any art be construed into the faintest indication of the faintest partiality for Mahommedanism, has ever been quoted, or ever will be quoted, from the first volume of the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

"To what then, it has been asked, could Johnson allude? Possibly to some anecdote or some conversation of which all trace is lost. One conjecture may be offered, though with diffidence. Gibbon tells us in his memoirs, that at Ox-

Shepherd. Tak awa your thoom. (*Reads*). "'It was in the year 1761,' says Mr Croker, 'that Goldsmith published his *Vicar of Wakefield*. This leads the editor to observe a more serious inaccuracy of Mrs Piozzi than Mr Boswell notices, when he says Johnson left her table to go and sell the *Vicar of Wakefield* for Goldsmith. Now Dr Johnson was not acquainted with the Thrales till 1765, four years after the book had been published.' Mr Croker, in reprehending the fancied inaccuracy of Mrs Thrale, has himself shown a degree of inaccuracy, or, to speak more properly, a degree of ignorance, hardly credible. *The Traveller* was not published till 1765; and it is a fact as notorious as any in literary history, that the *Vicar of Wakefield*, though written before *The Traveller*, was published after it. It is a fact which Mr Croker may find in any common Life of Goldsmith; in that written by Mr Chalmers, for example. It is a fact which, as Boswell tells us, was distinctly stated by Johnson, in a conversation with Sir Joshua Reynolds. It is therefore quite possible and probable, that the celebrated scene of the landlady, the sheriff's-officer, and the bottle of Madeira, may have taken place in 1765. Now Mrs Thrale expressly says that it was near the beginning of her acquaintance with Johnson, in 1765, or at all events not later than 1766, that he left her table to succour his friend. Her accuracy is therefore completely vindicated."

North. Thank ye, James.

Shepherd. You canna do less—for sic a peck o' trashy havers never, I sincerely howp, na, devoutly believe, never left ma lips afore. I think it mentioned a bottle o' Madeira. Here's ane. Sir, your health.

ford he took a fancy for studying Arabic, and was prevented from doing so by the remonstrances of his tutor. Soon after this, the young man fell in with Bossuet's controversial writings, and was speedily converted by them to the Roman Catholic faith. The apostasy of a gentleman commoner would of course be for a time the chief subject of conversation in the common room of Magdalene. His whim about Arabic learning would naturally be mentioned, and would give occasion to some jokes about the probability of his turning Mussulman. If such jokes were made, Johnson, who frequently visited Oxford, was very likely to hear them."—*Note to Essay on Croker's Edition of Boswell's Life of Johnson.*

To this explanation Mr Croker assents. He says, "I now incline to believe, as was suggested by Mr Macaulay, that it [Johnson's sarcasm about Gibbon's Mahommedanism] may have referred to some Oxford rumours of earlier infidelity."—P. 484.

North. Here again the Reviewer, in attempting to correct a verbal inaccuracy, displays "the error or the ignorance" of which he unjustly accuses Mr Croker. It would, indeed, have been more accurate if Mr Croker had said that Goldsmith had, in 1761, "*sold the work to the publisher*," for it was not actually published to the world till after *The Traveller;* but this fact has nothing to do with the point in question, which is the time when Goldsmith *sold* the work, and whether Johnson could have left Thrale's table to sell it for him.—In other words, whether the sale took place prior to 1765. Mr Croker says ay—the Reviewer says no—and the Reviewer is decidedly in the wrong, and Mr Croker is clearly right, according to the very authority to which the Reviewer refers us. Chalmers tells us, indeed, that the novel was published after the poem—but he also tells us, to the utter discomfiture of the Reviewer, that "the novel was sold, and the *money paid for it, some time before!*" So that the sale took place, even according to the Reviewer's own admission, *before* 1765.[1]

Tickler. Q. E. D.

North. But this is not all. The Reviewer states that *The Traveller* was *published* in 1765; but even in this fact he is wrong. *The Traveller* was published in 1764; and if he will open the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1764, he will find extracts in it from that poem. This fact corroborates Mr Croker's inference. Mrs Piozzi had said that Johnson was called away from her table, *either in* 1765 *or* 1766, to sell the novel. Mr Croker says this must be inaccurate, because the book was sold long before that date. Now, it is proved that it was sold before the publication of *The Traveller*, and it is also proved that *The Traveller* was published in 1764; and finally the Reviewer's *assertion*, that "it is quite *possible* and *probable* that the sale took place in 1765," is thus shown to be "a *monstrous blunder.*"

Shepherd. O, sir! but you're a terrible tyke, when you lay your mouth on a messan[2] to gie him a bit worryin for your ain amusement!

North. Read on, James.

Shepherd. Ae paragraph, and nae mair. If you ask me

[1] Mr Prior, the best authority probably on this question, states that the *Vicar of Wakefield* was probably *sold* in 1764, and that it was *published* in 1766.—*Life of Goldsmith*, vol. ii. pp. 17, 109.

[2] *Messan*—a small dog.

again, I'll rebel. "The very page which contains this monstrous blunder, contains another blunder, if possible, more monstrous still. Sir Joseph Mawbey, a foolish member of Parliament, at whose speeches and whose pig-sties the wits of Brookes's were, fifty years ago, in the habit of laughing most unmercifully, stated, on the authority of Garrick, that Johnson, while sitting in a coffee-house at Oxford, about the time of his doctor's degree, used some contemptuous expressions respecting Home's play and Macpherson's *Ossian*. 'Many men,' he said, 'many women, and many children, might have written *Douglas*.' Mr Croker conceives that he has detected an inaccuracy, and glories over poor Sir Joseph, in a most characteristic manner. 'I have quoted this anecdote solely with the view of showing to how little credit hearsay anecdotes are in general entitled. Here is a story published by Sir Joseph Mawbey, a member of the House of Commons, and a person every way worthy of credit, who says he had it from Garrick. Now mark:—Johnson's visit to Oxford, about the time of his doctor's degree, was in 1754, the first time he had been there since he left the university. But *Douglas* was not acted till 1756, and *Ossian* not published till 1760. All, therefore, that is new in Sir Joseph Mawbey's story is false.' Assuredly we need not go far to find ample proof that a member of the House of Commons may commit a very gross error. Now mark, say we, in the language of Mr Croker. The fact is, that Johnson took his *Master's* degree in 1754, and his *Doctor's* degree in 1775. In the spring of 1776 he paid a visit to Oxford, and at this visit a conversation respecting the works of Home and Macpherson might have taken place, and in all probability did take place. The only real objection to the story Mr Croker has missed. Boswell states, apparently on the best authority, that as early at least as the year 1763, Johnson, in conversation with Blair, used the same expressions respecting *Ossian*, which Sir Joseph represents him as having used respecting *Douglas*. Sir Joseph, or Garrick, confounded, we suspect, the two stories. But their error is venial compared with that of Mr Croker."

North. Now, this is a tissue of misrepresentation. The words "*about the time of his doctor's degree*," which the Reviewer attributes to Mr Croker, are Sir Joseph Mawbey's own, and distinguished by Mr Croker with marks of quota-

tion (omitted by the Reviewer) to call the reader's attention to the mistake, which Mr Croker supposes Sir Joseph to have made as to the date of the anecdote. But, says the Reviewer, "Mr Croker has *missed* the only real objection to the story, namely, that Johnson had used, as early as 1763, respecting *Ossian*, the same expressions which Sir Joseph represents him as having used respecting *Douglas*." This is really too bad. The Reviewer says, Mr Croker has *missed*, because he himself has chosen to *suppress!* Mr Croker's note distinctly states the very fact which he is accused of *missing!* "Every one knows," says Mr Croker, "that Dr Johnson said of *Ossian* that 'many men, many women, and many children, might have written it;" and Mr Croker concludes by inferring exactly what the Reviewer does, that Sir Joseph Mawbey was inaccurate in thus applying to *Douglas* what had been really said of *Ossian!* But the Reviewer, in addition to suppressing Mr Croker's statement, blunders his own facts; for he tells us, that Johnson's visit to Oxford, about the time of his doctor's degree, was "in the spring of 1776." I beg to inform him it was in the latter end of May 1775. (Let him see Boswell, viii. p. 254.) The matter is of no moment at all, but shows that the Reviewer falls into the same inaccuracies for which he arraigns Mr Croker, and which he politely calls in this very instance "*scandalous*."

Shepherd. I'll be hanged gin I read out anither word. There's the Blue and Yellow. Read it yoursel—Sir, your health again I wush.

North (*reads*). "Boswell has preserved a poor epigram by Johnson, inscribed 'ad Lauram parituram.' Mr Croker censures the poet for applying the word *puella* to a lady in Laura's situation, and for talking of the beauty of Lucina. 'Lucina,' he says, 'was never famed for her beauty.' If Sir Robert Peel had seen this note, he possibly would again have refuted Mr Croker's criticisms by an appeal to Horace. In the secular ode, Lucina is used as one of the names of Diana, and the beauty of Diana is extolled by all the most orthodox doctors of ancient mythology, from Homer, in his *Odyssey*, to Claudian, in his *Rape of Proserpine*. In another ode, Horace describes Diana as the goddess who assists the 'laborantes utero *puellas*.'"

Shepherd. It's the same in the Forest.

North. Euge! by this rule, the Reviewer would prove that

HECATE was famed for her *beauty*, for "Hecate is one of the names of Diana; and the beauty of Diana," and, *consequently*, *of Hecate*,—"is extolled by all the most orthodox doctors of heathen mythology."

Shepherd. Hecate a beauty! I aye thocht she had been a furious fricht — black-a-viced,[1] pockey-ort,[2] wi' a great stool[3] o' a beard.

North. Mr Croker does not, as the Reviewer says he does, *censure* the poet for the application of the word *puella* to a lady in Laura's situation; but he says, that the designation in the first line, which was proposed as a *thesis* of the lady as *pulcherrima puella*, would lead us to expect anything rather than the turn which the latter lines of the epigram take, of representing her as about to lie in. It needs not the authority either of Horace or the Shepherd to prove that "*puellæ*" will sometimes be found "*laborantes utero.*" But it will take more than the authority of the Reviewer to persuade me that Mr Croker was wrong in saying that it seems a very strange mode of complimenting an English beauty.

Shepherd. And has the cretur failed in pintin out ony inaccuracies ava in Mr Croker?

North. I have shown, my boy, that he has charged Mr Croker, in some instances, ignorantly, and in others falsely, of ignorance and falsehood; and such being the Reviewer's own sins in the course of half a sheet of the Blue and Yellow, manifestly got up with much assiduity, for he quotes, I perceive, from all the five volumes, is it not contemptible to hear his chuckle over Mr Croker, who in the course of between two and three thousand additions to Boswell, has been shown to have fallen, perhaps, into some half-dozen errors or inaccuracies, one of them evidently a misprint — one an expression apparently incorrect, because elliptical—and the others——

Shepherd. Mere trifles, if like the alleged lave o' them ye hae quoted.

North. Mr Croker has been convicted of the "gross and scandalous" inaccuracy of having assigned wrong dates to the deaths of Derrick, Sir Herbert Croft, and the amiable Sir William Forbes, biographer of Beattie.

[1] *Black-a-viced*—of a dark complexion.

[2] *Pockey-ort*—marked with the small-pox.

[3] "A great *stool* o' a beard"—a great *bush* of a beard.

Shepherd. What'n enormities! He maun dree penance by a pilgrimage to Loch Derg. What other crimes has Mr Croker committed?

North. He has, moreover, attributed to Henry Bate Dudley, the Fighting Parson, the Editorship of the old *Morning Herald*, instead of the old *Morning Post*.

Shepherd. What a sinner!

North. And he has erroneously said, that Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga took place in March 1778, instead of October 1777. He is mistaken, too, in saying that Lord Townshend was not Secretary of State till 1720.

Shepherd. In short, the seven deadly sins!

North. The perpetration of which has so incensed the immaculate and infallible Reviewer, that he has not scrupled to assert that the whole of Mr Croker's part of the work is ill compiled, ill arranged, ill expressed, and ill printed.

Shepherd. Fee! faw! fum! I smell the bluid o' a pairty man.

North. Fetid in faction.

Tickler. Can this be the same Pseudo-Samson who supposes he slew Southey and Sadler—and that he has now smitten Croker under the fifth rib?

North. The same; and I lament to see a young man of his endowments a prey to such pitiful impulses of malice, which, impotent as are the fumblings they excite, cannot fail to weaken the intellect they degrade down to such paltry work, and will make one who is now not unjustly the object of partial admiration, ere long that of general contempt.

Shepherd. Thank heaven, sir, that I'm out o' the stour[1] o' pairty in the Forest! In cities, towns, and villages, frae Lunnon down to Pettycur, it keeps drivin in your face, till in angry blindness you stoiter again' your fellow-creturs borin alang in the opposite direction, or rin yoursel wi' a dunsh again' the wa'. But a's sweet and serene out-by yonner, sir, and natur follows her ain way in obedience to the everlastin laws that bring ae season in beauty out o' the bosom o' the ither, the shady simmer broonin awa by imperceptible gradations o' colour intil the gorgeous autumn—the autumn fadin awa in fire intil the seelent snaws o' winter—and the winter in gude time layin aside her white mantle, and in green symar[2]

[1] *Stour*—flying dust. [2] *Symar*—Cymar, scarf.

changin afore the gratefu' gaze intil the warld-worshipped spring.

North. No Reform needed there, James.

Shepherd. Weel said, sir—nae Reform—except in our ain hearts—and there it'ill be needed as lang's St Mary's[1] rows[2] the silver waters o' the Yarrow, wi' a' their eemaged clouds, hills, and trees, to join her sister Ettrick, ere the twa melt their name and natur in the sea-seeking Tweed.

Tickler. In spite of all that has been said, Mr North, James, is the only critic of the age that, in his judgments on literature, is unbiassed by his political predilections.

Shepherd. I canna gang just that length alang wi' ye, Mr Tickler; for noo and then the tae o' the Tory wull peep out frae aneath the robes o' Rhadamanthus. In soumin up the evidence again' the prisoner at the bar (and every author's a panel), his eloquence I've sometimes thocht has had rather a little leanin towards the culprit that had the gude fortun no to be a Whig, although there could be nae dout o' his guilt. An' sure I am, that in cases I could mention, he has induced the Jury to acquit the criminal, wi' a verdict o' "no proven," when everybody in the court, includin those in the box and on the bench, kent that there was a thief afore them, as certainly as if they had grupped the plagiary wi' his haun in the man's breeks.

Tickler. Every judge should lean to the side of mercy.

Shepherd. That's true. But then again, sir, on the ither haun, whan the accused has happened to be a Whig, and the evidence, though strong again' him, admittin o' some dout, I've thocht that I've sometimes seen a deevil darkenin in his een, and heard a deevil thunderin frae his lips, death to the sinner wha itherwise micht hae been allowed to get aff wi' banishment to Botany Bay for the term o' his natural life. This is scarcely justice.

Tickler. Yet, granting all that to be true, what does it prove but that our venerable friend is human?

Shepherd. Say rather inhuman.

North. Let me be impeached. But pray particularise.

Shepherd. No—I won't—for I've nae wish to be personal. Suffeece it to say, that twa-three lecterary Tories are trottin up and doun baith toon and kintra the noo unco crouse, wha,

[1] St Mary's Loch, out of which the Yarrow flows. [2] *Rows*—rolls.

if the High Court o' Justiciary had dune their duty, o' which you are the Lord Justice Clerk, would hae been knappin stanes across the water, and that a wheen Whigs are, awin[1] to you, established in sma' shops in Hobart's Toon, wha micht hae been tryin to pick up a no very dishonest livelihood in their ain kintra o' Cockayne, say by sellin saloop.

North. This much I must say in my own vindication, James, that I have never known an instance of one such delinquent, on his return from transportation, after expiry of his term, conducting himself in such a way as to leave any doubt on my mind that he should originally have been hanged.

Shepherd. Safe us! What do you mean by being hanged originally? You haena invented, I howp, a mair savage style o' strangulation? You're no for layin aside the rape, and for garrin the executioner do his duty wi' the finger and thoom?

North. I have now my eye on some delinquents, who, if tried before me——

Shepherd. Wull be convickit——

North. And if convicted, put to death in the way you mention——

Shepherd. But for that purpose ye maun bring in a new Bill.

North. My Lord Melbourne[2] has promised to do so immediately after the prorogation—provided it appears that during the dark nights spring-guns have worked well——

Shepherd. And that Swing has been gruppit in a man-trap.

North. Look, James, at the Lord Chancellor[3]——

Shepherd. I do. An' in that mane o' his, he looks like a lion-ape—at ance ludicrous and fearsome—a strange mixture o' the meanest and the michtiest o' a' beasts. Hairy Broom——

Tickler. The Besom of destruction——

Shepherd. Soopin the Court o' Chancery, like a strang wun', the chaff frae a barn-floor. See that he doesna scatter in the air the wheat that o' richt belangs to the suitors. Auld Eldon used to lay't up carefully in heaps, that it micht be carried awa afterwards by the richt owners, often difficult to be determined——

[1] *Awin*—owing.

[2] At this time Lord Melbourne was Home Secretary.

[3] Brougham.

Tickler. In the decision of a judge, James, what the world demands now—is despatch.

Shepherd. The idea o' the balance trembling to a hair is noo obsolete! Yet it was an idea, sir, o' the finest grandeur, and I've gazed on't personified in a pictur, till I hae sworn a seelent oath in a' cases o' diffeeculty to ca' on my conscience wi' the same nicest adjustment to look alang the beam ere she decided that it had settled intil the unwaverin and everlastin richt.

North. Brougham is a great orator, as orators go, James, sober or——

Shepherd. What?

North. And some of his speeches in the House of Commons, in favour of the mitigation of our penal code, were noble in eloquence and in argument. He boldly denounced the doctrine of the justice of capital punishments in cases of forgery, the doctrine of its expediency even in a country that had grown great and glorious by commerce.

Shepherd. I hae nae douts on baith.

Tickler. And I have none either. Fauntleroy[1] performed an appropriate part in the character of Swing. Yet, so cheap is pity, that the most vulgar pauper can afford to pipe his eye for the fate of the unfeeling forger, who has wasted on insatiable prostitutes the pittances of widows and orphans, forgetting their faces and their hands held up to Heaven in resignation by their cold hearths, in the mournful sight, forsooth, of the white cheeks and closed eyes of a cowardly and hypocritical convict quivering, not in remorse for his crime, but in terror of its punishment, on the scaffold that has shook to the tread of many a wretch, unpitied, because poor—and unpetitioned for, because no—Banker.

North. Let us, at another time, argue this great question. But hark! the thunderous voice of the great Commoner subdued down to the timid tone of the Lord Chancellor, who, on the very same petition being presented by the Duke of Sussex, which, in former times, called for Henry Brougham's indignant denunciations of cruelty and injustice, lately opened his mouth and emitted nothing but wind, like a barn-door fowl agape in the pip!

[1] Henry Fauntleroy, banker, was tried at the Old Bailey for forgery, 30th October 1824, found guilty, and executed a month afterwards.

Shepherd. What lang thin folios are thae you're lookin at, Mr Tickler? Do they conteen picturs?

Tickler. "The Beauties of the Court of King Charles the Second, a series of Portraits illustrating the Memoirs of De Grammont, Pepys, Evelyn, Clarendon, and other Contemporary Writers; with Memoirs, Critical and Biographical, by Mrs Jameson, authoress of *Memoirs of the Loves of the Poets*, and the *Diary of an Ennuyée*."

North. One of the most eloquent of our female writers—full of feeling and fancy—a true enthusiast with a glowing soul.

Shepherd. Mrs Jameson's prose aye reminds me o' Miss Landon's poetry—and though baith hae their fauts, I would characterese baith alike by the same epithet—rich. I hate a simple style, for that's only anither word for puir. What I mean is, that when you can say nae better o' a style than that it's simple, you maun be at a great loss for eulogium. There's naething simpler nor water, and, at times, a body drinks't greedily frae the rim o' his hat made intil a scoop; but for a' that, in the lang rin, I prefer porter.

Tickler. Much.

North. In calling water the best of elements, Pindar was considering it as the groundwork of Glenlivet.

Shepherd. Nae dout, Glenlivet's pure speerit, and in ae sense simple: but then it's an essence—an ethereal essence o' the extract o' maut—and water's but the medium in which it's conveyed. But o' a' the liquids, no ane's simple except water. Even milk and water's a wee composite, and has its admirers—though no here. But let me look at the Beauties.

Tickler. Avast hauling.

Shepherd. That's richt—every man his ain number. And wha's fa'n to my share, but her wham Mrs Jameson weel ca's "the pretty, witty, merry, open-hearted Nelly"—that jewel o' a cretur, Nell Gwynn! Gie me a kiss, ma lassie! Better for thee hadst thou been born in the Forest!

North. La Belle Hamilton! La Belle Stewart! Superb Sultana with voluptuous bust! Divine Diana, dreaming of delight and Endymion!

Shepherd. What's that you're sayin, sir? Her bosom's no worth lookin at, I'm sure, in comparison wi' wee Nelly's, that reminds ane o' the Sang o' Solomon. I wunner hoo Sir Peter could control himsel, sae as to be able to draw't. Surely

King Charlie keepit watch on the penter a' the time he was shapin and colouring thae buddin, budded, full-blawn blossoms o' the bower o' Paradise!

Tickler. James!

Shepherd. The penter, in ae sense, has the advantage ower the poet, when dealin wi' female charms; in anither, the poet ower the penter. He has the material object afore his material ee, and the brush maun obey the breist in a' its swellins, and that's the definition o' a portrait. But we, sir, set an immaterial shadow afore our spiritual een, an' in words which are but air—in verse, which is o' a' air the finest, we breathe intil being the beauty we idealeeze, and the vision o' Bonny Kilmeny gangs up the glen, floatin awa in poetry!

North. La Belle Hamilton!—She who was "grande et gracieuse dans le moindre de ses mouvements!" "Le petit nez delicat"——

Shepherd. Snivelin French! La bonny Gwynn! quelle fut sae fu' de feu d'amour sur les yeux ——

Tickler. What is that?

Shepherd. French.

North. Among her luxuriant tresses, a few pearls negligently thrown—

> "Tresses that wear
> Jewels, but to declare
> How much themselves more precious are.
> Each ruby there,
> Or pearl, that dares appear,
> Be its own blush—be its own tear."

Shepherd. Nae pearlins amang ma Nelly's hair, curlin and clusterin roun' her lauchin cheeks, and ae ringlet lettin itsel doun alang her neck, amaist till her bonny breist, wi' sic a natural swirl, ane thinks it micht be removed by the haun—sae—or blawn awa—sae—by a breath. Wha's she you're glowerin at, Mr Tickler?

Tickler. Castlemaine—Cleveland. Voluptuous vixen! Insatiate harpy!

Shepherd. An' by what depraved instinct, sir, seleck ye and fasten upon her? It speaks volumns.

Tickler. Coarse, cruel, insolent, and savage—yet, by some witchlike art, the fair fury could wind round her finger all the heartstrings of the laughter-loving King.

Shepherd. Yet believe me, sir, that strange as micht hae been his passion for sic a limmer, he would hae been glad, on awakenin some mornin, to find her lyin aside him stiff-and-stark-stane-dead. Infatuation is fed by warm leevin flesh and bluid, and ae cauld touch o' the unbreathin clay breaks the pernicious spell; but true love outlives the breath that sichs itsel awa frae the breist even o' a faithfu' leman, and weeps in distraction ower the frail and her frailties when they hae drapped into the dust.

North. Let us close the fair folios, for the present, my boys. I do not deny that many worthy people may have serious objections to the whole work. But not I. Tis a splendid publication, and will, ere long, be gracing the tables of a thousand drawing-rooms. The most eminent engravers have been employed, and they have done their best; nor do I know another lady who could have executed her task, it must be allowed a ticklish one, with greater delicacy than Mrs Jameson. "She has nought extenuated, nor set down aught in malice," when speaking of the frail or vicious; and her own clear spirit kindles over the record of their lives, who in the polluted air of that court, spite of all trials and temptations, preserved without flaw or stain the jewel of their souls, their virtue.

Shepherd. That's richt. Mony a moral may be drawn by leddies in high life *yet* frae sic a wark. "Dinna let puir Nelly starve!!!"

North. When from the picture of Castlemaine, in her triumphant beauty, we turn, says Mrs Jameson, to her last years and her death, there lies in that transition—a deeper moral than in twenty sermons. Let woman lay it to her heart!

Shepherd. Amen.

North. Come, my dear James—before going to supper—give us a song.

Shepherd. I'm no in vice, sir. But I'll receet you some verses I made ae gloomy afternoon last week—ca'd "The Monitors."

North. Better than any song, I venture to predict, from the very title.

(SHEPHERD *recites.*)

THE MONITORS.

The lift looks cauldrife i' the west,
The wan leaf wavers frae the tree,
The wind touts[1] on the mountain's breast
A dirge o' waesome note to me.
It tells me that the days o' glee,
When summer's thrilling sweets entwined
An' love was blinkin in the ee,
Are a' gane by an' far behind;

That winter wi' his joyless air,
An' grizzly hue, is hasting nigh,
An' that auld age, an' carkin care,
In my last stage afore me lie.
Yon chill and cheerless winter sky,
Troth but 'tis eerisome[2] to see,
For ah! it points me to desery
The downfa's o' futurityе.

I daurna look unto the east,
For there my morning shone sae sweet;
An' when I turn me to the west,
The gloaming's like to gar me greet;
The deadly hues o' snaw and sleet
Tell of a dreary onward path;
Yon new moon on her cradle-sheet,
Looks like the Hainault scythe[3] of death.

Kind Monitors! ye tell a tale
That oft has been my daily thought;
Yet, when it came, could nought avail,
For sad experience, dearly bought,
Tells me it was not what I ought,
But what was in my power to do,
That me behoved. An' I hae fought
Against a world wi' courage true.

Yes—I hae fought an' won the day,
Come weal, come woe, I carena by,[4]

[1] *Touts*—sounds. [2] *Eerisome*—fear-inspiring.
[3] The Hainault or Flemish scythe—an intermediate implement between the sickle and the cradle-scythe. [4] *I carena by*—I am indifferent.

I am a king! My regal sway
Stretches o'er Scotia's mountains high,
And o'er the fairy vales that lie
Beneath the glimpses o' the moon,
Or round the ledges o' the sky,
In twilight's everlasting noon.

Who would not choose the high renown,
'Mang Scotia's swains the chief to be,
Than be a king an' wear a crown,
'Mid perils, pain, an' treacherye?
Hurra! The day's my own—I'm free
Of statesmen's guile, an' flattery's train;
I'll blaw my reed of game an' glee,
The Shepherd is himself again!

"But, Bard—ye dinna mind your life
Is waning down to winter snell—
That round your hearth young sprouts are rife,
An' mae to care for than yoursel."
Yes, that I do—that hearth could tell
How aft the tear-drap blinds my ee;
What can I do, by spur or spell,
An' by my faith it done shall be.

And think—through poortith's eerie breach,
Should Want approach wi' threatening brand,
I'll leave them canty sangs will reach
From John o' Groats to Solway strand.
Then what are houses, gowd, or land,
To sic an heirship left in fee?
An' I think mair o' auld Scotland,
Than to be feared for mine or me.

True, she has been a step-dame dour,
Grudging the hard-earned sma' propine,[1]
On a' my efforts looking sour,
An' seemed in secret to repine.
Blest be Buccleuch an' a' his line,
For ever blessèd may they be;
A little hame I can ca' mine
He reared amid the wild for me.

[1] *Propine*—gift.

Goodwife—without a' sturt[1] or strife,
Bring ben the siller bowl wi' care ;
Ye are the best an' bonniest wife,
That ever fell to poet's share ;
An' I'll send o'er for Frank—a pair
O' right good-hearted chiels are we—
We'll drink your health—an' what is mair,
We'll drink our Laird's wi' three times three.

To the young Shepherd, too, we'll take
A rousing glass wi' right good-will ;
An' the young ladies o' the Lake,
We'll drink in ane—an awfu' swill !
Then a' the tints o' this warld's ill
Will vanish like the morning dew,
An' we'll be blithe an' blither still—
Kind winter Monitors, adieu !

This warld has mony ups an' downs,
Atween the cradle an' the grave,
O' blithesome hauns an' broken crowns,
An' douks[2] in chill misfortune's wave ;
All these determined to outbrave,
O'er fancy's wilds I'll wing anew,
As lang as I can lilt a stave,—
Kind winter Monitors, adieu !

North. Yes—it makes a man proud of his country, my dear James, to hear from living lips such noble strains as these—as full of piety as of poetry—and flowing fresh from the holiest fount of inspiration—gratitude to the Giver of all Mercies.

Tickler. That's the kind of composition I like, my dear Shepherd, rich and racy, bold, vigorous, and free, at once high and humble—such a strain as, under other circumstances, might have been sung by some high-souled covenanter on the mountain-side.

"Warm from the heart, and faithful to its fires !"

North. James, do you love me ?

Shepherd. That I do, mine honoured Christopher—for your ain sake—for the sake o' Geordy Buchanan—and for the sake o' auld Scotland.

[1] *Sturt*—trouble. [2] *Douks*—plunges.

North. And do you forgive me all my——

Shepherd. What? Gie me the lend o' the crutch till Christmas, and if I dinna floor a' the fules that ever said a single syllable against your public character—as for your preevat, there detraction's self's a dumbie—may I be droon'd neist time I tak Yarrow Ford!

North. I should feel, my dearest Jamie, defenceless, and what is perhaps worse, offenceless, without——

Shepherd. What? And me brandishin't roun' about my head like a flail, till it becam invisible to the naked ee, and its existence was kent but by the crood o' Cockneys sprawlin afore my path.

North. It shall be yours, James, during the Recess.

Shepherd. An' for fear o' its breakin in my hauns, I shall hae't whupt wi' twine——

North. 'Tis a bit of tough timber—and when it snaps, you may be expecting to hear that the Caledonia has sprung her mainmast, and flung all her guns overboard.

Shepherd. I fear, sir, we're likely to hae troubled times.

North. My mind is naturally hopeful——

Shepherd. I dinna think it, sir. Your frame o' body's sanguine aneuch, and you've still a red spat on ilka cheek, like an unwithered rose; but you're sowl's far ower sage to be sanguine—You're o' a melancholy temperament, my dear freen, like maist ither men o' genius—and there's aye a still sad look, bricht though their flashes may be, in the een o' an auld prophet. You're a seer, Mr North, and the second-sicht seldom shows ony ither vision than o' bluid or tears.

North. The spirit of the land will have settled down into tranquillity by about Candlemas—and then we shall see carried a salutary and satisfactory Measure of Reform, the principle, if not the details of which, I shall lay before you, James, at our next Noctes.

Tickler. Think of a Prime Minister of England browbeaten and bearded in his own house by a deputation of pawnbrokers headed by a tailor!

North. And think of a Chancellor of the Exchequer exulting in the honour conferred upon him in a vote of thanks by a ragged rabble of radicals, collected to swear by all the filth on their fingers, that, unless Government did as they desired, they would pay no more taxes!

Shepherd. And anither wee bit cretur o' a lordie, that can hardly speak aboon his breath, tellin the same seditious screw o' scoonrels, that their cause and his would sune triumph ower "the whusper o' a faction." That's ae way o' strengthenin the Peerage.

North. All will be right again, James, I repeat it, about Candlemas. What pure delight and strong, James, in the study of Literature, Poetry, and Philosophy! And with what a sense o' hollowness at the heart of other things do we turn from such meditations to the stir and noise of the passing politics of the day!

Shepherd. It's like fa'in frae heaven to earth—frae a throne in the blue sky, amang the braided clouds, doun upon a heap o' glaur—frae the empyrean on a midden.

North. And why? Because selfish interests, often most mistaken, prevail over the principles of eternal truth, which are shoved aside or despised, or forgotten, or perverted, or desecrated, while people, possessed by the paltriest passions, proclaim themselves patriots, and liberty loathes to hear her name shouted by the basest of slaves.

Shepherd. Dinna froon sae fiercely, sir. I canna thole that face.

North. Now it is Parga—Parga—Parga! Now the Poles—the Poles—the Poles!

Shepherd. Noo daft about the glorious Three Days—and noo routin like a field o' disturbed stirks for Reform.

North. Speak to them about their hobby of the year before, and they have no recollection of ever having bestridden his back.

Shepherd. They're superficial shallow brawlers, sir, just like thae commonplace burns without ony character, that hae nae banks and nae scenery, and, as it would seem, nae soorce, but that every wat day contrive to get up a desperate brattle amang the lowse stanes, carryin awa perhaps some wee wooden brig, and neist mornin sae entirely dried up that you mistak the disconsolate channel for an unco coorse road, and pity the puir cattle.

North. But Poetry, which is the light of Passion and Imagination; and Philosophy, which is the resolution of the prismatic colours——

Shepherd. Stop that eemage lest you spoil't—are holy and

eternal—and only in holiness and in truth can they be worshipped.

Tickler. Hark!

Shepherd. The Timepiece! The Timepiece! I heard it gie warnin, but said naething. Noo it has dune chappin. Let's aff to the Blue Parlour—sooper—sooper—hurraw—hurraw—hurraw!

[*They vanish.*

XXXII.

(NOVEMBER 1832.)

The Library in the Lodge. Time,—Seven o' Clock.

North *and* Tickler.

North. No—I have not left the Lodge for ten miles, or two hours, during the whole summer.

Tickler. Domestic Devil!

North. Say rather, bird in a cage, that keeps perpetually hopping about, up and down, from turf to twig, now and then with loving bill nibbling the wires of its beloved imprisonment, occasionally picking a little seed, and not seldom on the spur of the moment drawing up its tiny bucket, and sipping a drop of the mountain dew, to clear its song and brighten its plumage.

Tickler. Liker a cock on his own——

North. Hush! or Bird of Paradise, who——

Tickler. Whew! or Bubbly-Jock erecting his tail in proud persuasion of his being a peacock; or——

North. Woodlark, Scotia's Nightingale, who, unfatigued by day-songs, poured around the grassy nest, where sits his mate assiduous o'er callow brood or chirping shells, prolongs his ditties far into the night, and by the homeward shepherd on the hill is heard, not seen, sweet-singing midst the stars.

Tickler. Blanks! by all that is musical. But "say, sweet warbling woodlark, say," what mysterious meaning lies enveloped in the image of "mate assiduous" sitting on eggs? I devoutly trust Mrs Gentle is not in the fam——

North (*rising up in great indignation*). Sir, the honour of that lady is dearer to me than a million lives, nor shall the villain who dares to insinuate the remotest hint——

Tickler. Be not so furious, my dear sir ; I insinuated no remote hint——

North. She has been in Switzerland, sir, for more than nine months——

Tickler. Not another word, North. Your explanation is perfectly satisfactory; but why did not you accompany her and her lovely daughter to Lake Constance?

North. For fear of a censorious world, that will not suffer even old age to escape its slanders, with one foot in the grave.

Tickler. She is indeed a sad gossip, old Madam Public; yet there are some good points about her; and let me whisper in your ear, North, you are a prodigious favourite with the Frow —in her eyes a perfect Dutchman.

North. Her affection for me, Tickler, is, I assure you, of the most spiritual sort.

Tickler. And yours for her, as becomes a philosopher, Platonic. Yet human nature is weak; and be advised by me, North, to trust yourself alone with her as seldom as possible; for what, were you some day to declare with the Public a private marriage?

North. The *reading* Public! I well remember the days when she could spell with difficulty a simple dissyllable—when she lost herself in a complicated Polly, like a benighted nymph wandering through a wood.

Tickler. A complicated Polly! What is that?

North. Nebuchadnezzar.

Tickler. Chrononhotonthologos.

North. Methinks I see her, Tickler, in her Little Primer!

Tickler. Conning her "Reading made Easy."

North. Leaning her rosy cheek on a rosier arm with elbow rosier still——

Tickler. Peony of Peonies!

North. Now, alas! like a yellow lily that seems, in lieu of dew, to be fed with lamp-oil!

Tickler. And she has become the *writing* Public too?

North. That is the melancholy part of the concern, Tickler. She is now—to her shame and sorrow—a confirmed scribbler.

Tickler. And appears, without a blush on her brazen face, in print.

North. Yes—with my own eyes have I seen her absolutely in capitals.

Tickler. Worse than in kilts.

North. Kilts! Kilts are but petticoats of a smaller size; but it goes well-nigh to the breaking of my heart to see the reading, writing, ranting Public (an old woman too) in wire-wove hot-pressed paper printed breeches—*in shorts*, Tickler.

Tickler. Nay, *in tights*, which show her shapes to the worst advantage; for, as you observed, she is well stricken in years, and time tells on the figure even of a Diana.

North. Let's be serious. 'Twould seem as if reading and writing were the chief occupation now, in this once happy island, of human life. The constant cry or croak is—Education, Education. The People will sink under this eternal tuition—the next age will be a generation of Idiots. The invention of printing is a blessing which, by "busy Meddling Intellect," has been abused into a curse.

Tickler. Among the lower orders reading has grown into a dull disease, that dries up the sap, and slackens the sinews of life.

North. Ay, Tickler — the poor man's fireside was, I verily believe, in general, far happier in former times than now—with himself resting, after his day's darg, in an elbow-chair—if the house happened to hold one—his wife *fistling*[1] about in eager preparation of supper—and the brats on stools forming perhaps an octagon, each with a horn-spoon in its hand expectant of the coming crowdy——

Tickler. A pleasant picture. No boy or girl, from four to fourteen years of age, knows the extent of his or her mouth's capaciousness, till it gradually opens to its utmost width, in order to admit with unruffled surface, a huge horn spoonful——

North. Of crowdy. True. Now, crowdy is crowdy still, though with more difficulty procured than in the days I speak of; and poor people are still happy in supping it, for sacred hunger is the solace of life.

Tickler. Ay—the Pigot Diamond would be a poor price for a good appetite from a palate-palsied king to a *yaup*[2] beggar.

North. But, nowadays, reading is placed on the list of necessaries before eating.

Tickler. A greasy——

North. Say—creeshy.

[1] *Fistling*—bustling. [2] *Yaup*—hungry.

Tickler. A creeshy periodical, price a penny, takes precedence of a black-pudding of strong bull's blood and the generous suet——

North. The age of Haggis is gone!

Tickler. And Journeymen Tailors having discovered that "Knowledge is Power," starve on half-commons of this earth's cabbage, that they may feed on celestial custocks from a circulating library. Yes, North, Knowledge *is* Power. He who knows to cut out and stitch, and sew, and with unbaffled art, in defiance of nature's spite, to make a fit of it even on my amiable and most ingenious friend Sheridan Knowles's Hunchback—he—tailor though he be—is a MAN of Power, and is entitled at a Jubilee to unfold, emblazoned with that illustrious motto, the Standard of the Snips, to all the winds of heaven.

North. It is *leze majestie* now to speak of the "*lower* orders." But that is their right name, and they hold it from heaven. The "*labouring* classes" is a foolish form of speech. All that live labour.

Tickler. The Mite—the Mouse—and the Monarch.

North. The very Drone labours—in his own vocation—for soon as the Queen Bee is impregnated in the sunny air—all her stingless paramours are put to death.

Tickler. The Bee is a most inexplicable creature.

North. Who labours harder than I?

Tickler. I.

North. You—you Dragon-Fly?

Tickler. Yes—I—you Midge.

North. Whereas "lower" expresses the everlasting position of the classes to which it is in all honour applied; and he who pales or reddens at the epithet is a radical and a slave.

Tickler. Bravo!

North. And to them what knowledge is power? Of themselves and their duties, and where they shall find it?

Tickler. Why, in our farthing—and if our more ambitious modern circulating medium did not disdain that coin diminutive—in our *doit* political literature, that through lanes and alleys flutters its ephemeral life away on wings of whitey-brown.

North. Such are the means which sage philosophy doth

now employ for the regeneration of fallen man! The *lower* classes—I love the word—for it carries with it a calm humble meaning that speaks of Christian contentment—may still read the Bible if they will—Heaven forbid that the philosophers should prevent or dissuade them from so doing as often as they choose!—for the philosophers are occasionally of opinion that the Bible should be included in the School of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge.

Tickler. Are they?

North. But the Bible, according to their creed, is not in itself an all-in-all. The poor creature that reads but it, or even it chiefly, must be miserably ignorant—and all unfit to walk with anything like the dignity of a Reformer in a processional jubilee.

Tickler. Nor must he hope ever to rise into a Ten-Pounder.[1]

North. And millions on millions never can—nor could they though all the rags of all the beggars in Ireland were manufactured into paper, and when printed, strewed over the entire earth as thick as leaves in Vallambrosa.

Tickler. The forced—pumped waters will subside.

North. And leave the soil unenriched by any deposit.

Tickler. But not unencumbered with sand, gravel, and stones.

North. Which, however, will in good time be cleared away; and flowers and herbage, under a better system of culture, will be reinduced over the land.

Tickler. The people of Scotland—I leave you to speak of the English—are not more intelligent, and they certainly are less moral and religious, than they were even a quarter of a century ago.

North. I would fain hope that education with us is in much improved, though I fear in not a little deteriorated; but the people themselves, except in our large towns, or our small manufacturing ones, are still deeply impressed with a belief of the paramount importance of moral and religious instruction over every other kind; and while that is the case, let every other kind be encouraged in due subordination to that, without which no man's soul is safe, and the heart within him, overcome by this world's troubles, pines and dies.

Tickler. The object of almost all the paltry preaching about

[1] Householders who paid £10 a-year in rent had the elective franchise conferred on them by the Reform Bill of 1832.

the education of the "labouring" classes is avowedly political; and despicable as in itself it is, most of the instruction diffused is at this crisis perilous; for wiser and better men than were ever found among the Apostles of Infidelity——

North. Now,

> "See the deep fermenting tempest brew'd
> In the grim evening sky."

Tickler. Knowledge! Oh, dear! Listen for two minutes to a political pauper, who at the Chequers runs up a score for the sponge, the best-informed and the most acute of the coterie, that chuckles as he crows, and in what nook of Cimmeria gabbles a naked wretch, that lives in an earth-hole, and, in Nature's destitution, almost "wants discourse of reason," such a hideous hubbub of disordered savageness, which, as it foams or slavers from the lips of the truculent drunkard, is deemed "knowledge" by his long-eared audience, whose shallow brains are obfuscated by the fumes of ignorance and gin!"

North. And there are thousands of such bestial. But more lamentable far than such brutalities are to me the miserable mistakings of minds by no means depraved, on subjects that lie far beyond their comprehension, and with which, were they allowed to obey the dictates of their own reason and their own conscience, they would know and feel they had nothing to do—nothing but to follow the guidance and perform the mandates of those whose business it is to understand, to direct, to rule, and to govern—their own duty being not to scrutinise but to serve, not to expound but to obey.

Tickler. Truth and Toryism.

North. Yes—doctrine, which, when wisely acted on by rulers and by subjects, has saved those from becoming tyrants, and these from being slaves.

Tickler. And the "miserable mistakings" you speak of are part and parcel of that "Knowledge which is Power?"[1]

[1] For further elucidation of the popular, though very ambiguous, aphorism "Knowledge is Power," the reader is referred to Sir E. B. Lytton's admirable dialogue on that text in *My Novel*, book iv. chaps. xix. xx. The general tenor of the discussion is in harmony with the opinions expressed in the *Noctes*. The following are some of its points:—"This aphorism has been probably assigned to Lord Bacon upon the mere authority of the index to his works. It is the aphorism of the index-maker, certainly not of the great master of induc-

North. They talk of a state of transition. From what to what? From helotism to freedom? I ask you, Timothy, were the companions of our boyhood, among the rural villages and farms, the children of Helots? No—bold-faced boys and meek-eyed girls were they—with whom——

Tickler. Especially the girls——

North. You and I loved

"Round stacks at the gloaming at bogles to play!"

Tickler. Sweet creatures—many of them—even

"The lass with the gowden hair."

North. Would you or I, and we were no windlestraes then, Tim, but two young oaks, have dared to insult, had the devil entered us, the sister before her brother's face——

Tickler. Thank Heaven, no such devil ever entered into either of us. No, no, Kit, fair play's a jewel, and honour bright was the pole-star of our youthful days.

North. It was. But would not the callant whose home was a hovel, and his Saturday's and Sunday's breeches one and the same, have smashed his fist in the nose of any Aristocrat (Heaven bless the mark!) who dared to dishonour the pretty

tive philosophy. . . . This aphorism either says a great deal too much, or just—nothing at all. . . . Is not *ignorance* "power" too? And a power that has had much the best end of the quarter-staff. *All evil is power*, and does its power make it any the better? *Fanaticism is power*—and a power that has often swept away knowledge like a whirlwind. The Mussulman burns the library of a world — and forces the Koran and the sword from the schools of Byzantium to the colleges of Hindostan. . . . *Hunger is power*. The barbarians, starved out of their forests by their own swarming population, swept into Italy and annihilated letters. The Romans, however degraded, had at least more knowledge than the Goth and the Visigoth. And even in Greece, when Greek met Greek, the Athenians — our masters in all knowledge — were beat by the Spartans, who held learning in contempt. Wherefore you see that though knowledge be power, it is only *one* of the powers of the world; that there are others as strong, and often much stronger; and the assertion either means but a barren truism, not worth so frequent a repetition, or it means something which you would find it very difficult to prove. . . . . Your knowledge-mongers at present (that is, during the peace-agitation), call upon us to discard military discipline, and the qualities that produce it, from the list of the useful arts. And you insist upon knowledge as the great disbander of armies, and the foe of all military discipline! . . . . Even granting that the power of a class is therefore proportioned to its knowledge—pray, do you suppose that while your order, the operatives, are instructing themselves, all the rest of the community are to be at a stand-still? Diffuse knowledge as you may, you will never produce equality of knowledge. Those who have most leisure, application, and aptitude for learning, will still know the most. Nay, by a very

flower that grew beside his father's humble door? Had he not pride in his sister's innocence; and is such pride the virtue of a helot, is such innocence a jewel worn on the forehead of a slave?

Tickler. Your loquacity borders on eloquence. Fire away.

North. Did we find ignorance in "the huts where poor men lie?" No—the "auld clay biggins," dim as they were with peat-reek, were illuminated with knowledge——

Tickler. Illuminated! somewhat too fine a word—but I must not be too critical on the extemporaneous orator of the human race. Fire away, Kit.

North. You and I have stood at the ELDER'S DEATH-BED.[1]

Tickler. We have — some threescore years ago — and yet there were a hundred good as he in the same wild moorland parish.

North. We could remind one another of many a high history of humble worth, were we to stroll for an hour or two over that kirkyard!

Tickler. Ay—that we could, Kit. Let us go next summer, and meditate among the tombs.

North. That parish was, as it were, an epitome——

Tickler. No—not an epitome, a fair specimen——

North. Of Scottish rural life. And is there at this hour a

natural law, the more general the appetite for knowledge, the more the increased competition will favour those most adapted to excel by circumstance and nature. At this day there is a vast increase of knowledge spread over all society, compared with that in the Middle Ages; but is there not still greater distinction between the highly-educated gentleman and the intelligent mechanic, than there was then between the baron who could not sign his name, and the churl at the plough?—between the accomplished statesman, versed in all historical lore, and the voter whose politics are formed by the newspaper, than there was between the legislator who passed laws against witches, and the burgher who defended his guild from some feudal aggression?—between the enlightened scholar of to-day, than there was between the monkish alchemist and the blockhead of yesterday? Peasant, voter, and dunce of this century are no doubt wiser than the churl, burgher, and blockhead of the twelfth. But the gentleman, statesman, and scholar of the present age are at least quite as favourable a contrast to the alchemist, witch-burner, and baron of old. As the progress of enlightenment has done hitherto, so will it ever do. Knowledge is like capital: the more there is in a country, the greater the disparities in wealth between one man and another. Therefore, if the working class increase in knowledge, so do the other classes; and if the working class rise peacefully and legitimately into power, it is not in proportion to their own knowledge alone, but rather as it seems to the knowledge of the other orders of the community, that such augmentation of proportional power is just, and safe, and wise."

[1] One of the tales in Wilson's *Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life.*

single parish in braid Scotland, more virtuous than was the beautiful wilderness in which thou and I, Tim, learned poetry and religion, to understand and to venerate the liberty of Nature, as it breathed and broke forth from the peasant's heart?

Tickler. Not one. It's own dear self, I fear, is not what it was in that refulgent time——

North. Refulgent! Somewhat too strong a word, Timothy; but I must not be too critical——

Tickler. Yes—refulgent. And it is by far too weak a word.

North. God bless you—it is. Many of its black bright mosses are drained now, they say; and I cannot well deny that no rational objection can be made to the change of heather-moor into clover-meadow;—thorn-hedges, in pretty circles, and squares, and oblongs, are green and bright now, I am told, where of old not so much as a crumbling grey stone-wall enclosed the naked common; nor in spite of the natural tears shed from the poor widow's eyes, can I for more than a minute at a time seriously lament that deep-uddered kine should now lazily low and browse where ragged sheep did once perseveringly bleat and nibble;—single trees, that seem to have dropped from the sky, so quick their growth, now here and there hang their shadows, I have heard, over the band of reapers at their mid-day meal, where, when our "auld cloak was new," one single sickle sufficed for the sma' barley-rig, and the "solitary *lowland* lass" had to look for shelter from the sunshine beneath some rock in the desert; and to that change, too, can I conform the feelings of my somewhat saddened heart;—nay, groves and woods, the story goes, have girdled the stony hills where we two used to admire, all brightening by itself, the glorious Rowan-Tree, independent of the sun in its own native lustre; and may never the swinging axe be heard in that sylvan silence, for I confess the superior beauty, too, of the vesture that now decks the sides of those pastoral pyramids;—the shielings that we used to come upon, like birds' nests, far up near the heads of the glens where the curlew bred among the rushes, have "been a' red awa;" nor is their place, if sought for, to be found in the solitude; and farmhouses, slated too I hear—for thatch, wae's me! is fast falling out of fashion—now stand where no smoke was then seen but the morning mist; and God forbid I should

grieve that suchlike spots as these should have their permanent human dwellings;—mansions, in which rich men live, from upland swells overlook the low country far as the dim-seen spires of towns and cities that divide without diminishing the extent of the Great Plain through which rivers roll; and of a surety pleasant 'tis to think of honest industry finding its reward in well-used wealth, that builds up the stately structure on the site of the cottage where its possessor was born in poverty;—gone, I know, is the old House of God, walls, roof, spire, and all—spire not so tall as its contemporary Pine-Tree,—and the heritors have done well in erecting in its stead another larger kirk—with a tower—since they preferred a tower to a spire,—nor could they be wrong in widening the burial-ground, that had become crowded with graves—though methinks they might have preserved, for sake of the memorials sunk far within it, some sacred stones of the south wall;—Oh, Friend of my soul! though all these changes seem to have been from good to better, and some of them such as in the course of time must almost of themselves have taken place, men only letting the laws of Nature have "their own sweet will," yet such is the profound affection I bear to the past, and such the tenderness with which my heart regards all that appertained to the scenes where it first enjoyed all its best emotions, that I could almost weep to think that my beloved parish is not now, even to the knoll of broom and the rill of hazels, in all the self-same place which it was of old, when we walked in it up and down, through all seasons of the year to us equally delightful, as perfectly happy as spirits in Paradise![1]

Tickler. North, your picturesque is always pathetic; but now for the practical application.

North. I hate practical applications except in cases of tetanus, a cataplasm to the soles of the feet, of——

Tickler. Mustard, and so forth.

North. The virtues which we loved and admired during those happy days, were rooted ineradicably in the characters which sometimes they somewhat severely graced, by the power of causes which had not any alliance, however remote, with

[1] This paradise was the parish of the Mearns, near Paisley, with the minister of which (the Rev. Dr George Maclatchie) Professor Wilson was boarded in his early years.

those which are now thought, by too many persons, to be of such wondrous efficacy in the formation of right principles and feelings, which, by the by, always grow together, and maintain through life their due proportion. Some of the means which are now so pompously set at apparent work to enlighten the minds of the people, and to emollify their manners (*mores*), were then never dreamt of, even by the most visionary; and yet their minds were as full of light, and their manners were as full of rurality, or sylvanity, or urbanity, as they will be found to be now with the dwellers in grassy fields, leafy woods, or stony towns.

Tickler. And much more so.

North. Then it will be found, in the long-run, that the attempt to elevate the character of a people by cheap publications is very expensive.

Tickler. Very.

North. A penny-a-week is not, for a poor and industrious man, much to pay to a friendly society; for his condition is always, from within and from without, exceedingly precarious; and 'tis well to guard, at such sacrifice, sometimes no inconsiderable one, against the day in which no man can work.

Tickler. Good.

North. A penny paper fills the empty stomach with wind—or lies in it, in the shape of a ball; and 'tis hard to say which is the worser, flatulence or indigestion.

Tickler. Sometimes, no doubt, the small swallow is harmless, and sometimes even salutary; but, at the best, it cannot give much strength; and, at the end of a year, the money would have been far better bestowed in purchasing some pecks of meal, or half a boll of potatoes——

North. Or, ere the winter sets in, linsey-woolsey petticoats for the ditchers' daughters.

Tickler. I doubt if any man, earning wages by ordinary hand-work, ever continued such subscription through a twelve-month.

North. Never. They almost all give in within the quarter; for they either get angry with themselves, on finding that they are not one whit the wiser from studying the *Tatterdemalion*—or, growing conceited, they aspire to write for it—and a rejected contributor will not condescend to be an accepted subscriber.

Tickler. The word "cheap" is never out of some poor creatures' mouths — cheap bread, cheap law, cheap government, cheap religion.

North. Ay, above all things else, they must have cheap religion. They grudge a fair price for heaven.

Tickler. Charity, too, must be cheap. Give such *relief* to the poor as will just hold soul and body together—and, when they part company, let the dissection of the pauper's carcass pay for its burial.

North. "Why go to any unnecessary expense" on the birth, baptism, death, or funeral of any lump of clay? The most illustrious man-howdie would be munificently rewarded by a guinea, for ushering into existence any man-child that it is possible to conceive; and, for a mere lassie, there ought assuredly to be a drawback. There is something absolutely shocking in the idea of fees to the gentleman in black for making a baby a Christian. If any one thing on this earth ought to be cheap, it should be the marriage ceremony, for marriage itself, in the long run, is apt to prove a most expensive business; and, as interment consists mainly in digging a hole and filling it up again, that surely may be done for a mere nothing, in a country that has been so long overflowed by a ceaseless influx of Irishmen, the best diggers that ever handled spade or shovel. A plain coffin may be made of four rough deals, with a few second-hand nails to hold them together till the box reaches the bottom, and none but a madman would dream of studding it with extravagant brass knobs, bedecking it with a profuse plate of the same metal, and that again with a ruinous inscription, which no eye may read in the dark, so soon to be bedimmed with dark mould and the slime of worms. As for a hearse and six horses, large enough to contain, and strong enough to draw, ten ton of coals, or twenty butts of porter, caparisoned with plumage—and few things are dearer for their weight than feathers—all to convey an emaciated corpse that probably does not ride six stone, though the man might have once walked twenty—why, the custom is at once so preposterous, and so expensive, that the philosopher is at a loss to know whether he ought to laugh at the folly, or to weep at the waste—for his maxim on such matters is, "if it be done at all, let it be done cheaply."

(*Enter* PETER *with rizzers and cigars—he wheels his venerable Master's easy-chair to the accustomed nook, and then places* SOUTHSIDE *so as to face the good old man—sets before each worthy his own little circular table, with its own Argand lamp—rakes and stirs the fire into a roaring glow—and stumps out, noiselessly closing behind him the double door, that looks like one of the numerous oak-panels of the wall.*)

North. Affectionate and faithful creature!

Tickler. Ha! what worthies have we got here over the chimney-piece?

North (*smiling*). What do you think?

Tickler (*with a peculiar face*). Wordsworth, with Jeffrey on the one side, and Brougham on the other!

North. How placid and profound the expression of the whole Bard! The face is Miltonic—even to the very eyes; for though, thank Heaven, they are not blind, there is a dimness about the orbs. The temples I remember shaded with thin hair of an indescribable colour, that in the sunlight seemed a kind of mild auburn—but now they are bare,—and—nothing to break it—the height is majestic. No furrows—no wrinkles on that contemplative forehead—the sky is without a cloud—

> "The image of a Poet's soul,
> How calm! how tranquil! how serene!"

It faintly smiles. There is light and motion round the lips, as if they were about to "discourse most eloquent music." In my imagination, that mouth is never mute—I hear it

> "Murmuring by the living brooks,
> A music sweeter than their own."

Tickler. Is he wont so to sit with folded arms?

North. 'Twas not his habit of old, but it may be now—there seems to my mind much dignity in that repose. He is privileged to sit with folded arms, for all life long those hands have ministered religiously at the shrine of nature and nature's God; and the Priest, as age advances, may take his rest in the sanctuary, a voiceless worshipper. There is goodness in the great man's aspect—and while I look, love blends with reverence. How bland! The features in themselves are almost stern—but most humane the spirit of the grand assemblage—

"Not harsh, nor greeting, but of amplest power
To soften and subdue!"

Tickler. Jeffrey has a fine face. Mere animation is common; but those large dark eyes beam with intellect and sensibility—*naturally* finest both—alive perpetually and at work—yet never weary—as if that work were play—and needed not the restoration of sleep. Wit, in its full acceptation, is a weighty word—and by it I designate the mind of the Man! Taste in him is exalted into Imagination—Ingenuity brightens into Genius. He hath also Wisdom. But *nemo omnibus horis sapit;* and he made an unfortunate stumble over the Lyrical Ballads. He has had the magnanimity, however, I am told, to repent that great mistake, which to his fame was a misfortune—and, knowing the error of his ways, has returned to the broad path of Nature and Truth. How nobly has he written of Crabbe and Campbell, and Scott and Byron! Incomprehensible contradiction—the worst critic of the age is also the best; but the weeds of his mind are dead—the flowers are immortal. He is no orator, they say, in St Stephen's; but that mouth, even on the silent paper, gives them the lie; and I have heard him a hundred times the most eloquent of speakers. His is a brilliant name in the literature of Scotland.

North. It is—Francis Jeffrey.

Tickler. Brougham in his robes! Lord High Chancellor of England! Stern face and stalwart frame—and his mind, people say, is gigantic. They name him with Bacon. Be it so; the minister he and interpreter of Nature! Henry Brougham, in the eyes of his idolaters, is also an Edmund Burke. Be it so; at once the most imaginative and most philosophical of orators that ever sounded lament over the decline and fall of empires, while wisdom, listening to his lips, exclaimed,

"Was ne'er prophetic sound so full of woe!"

North. Come—come, Tickler—none of your invidious eulogies on the Man of the People.

Tickler. There he sits—a strong man—not about to run a race——

North. But who has run it, and distanced all competitors. There is something great, Tickler, in unconquerable and victorious energy——

Tickler. A man of many talents he—some of them seeming

almost to be of the highest order. Sword-like acuteness—sun-like perspicacity——

North. And sledge-hammer-like power.

Tickler. There is a wicked trouble in his keen grey eyes——

North. No. Restless, but not unhappy.

Tickler. Scorn has settled on that wide-nostril'd probo——

North. No. It comes and goes—the nose is benevolent.

Tickler. Do you say there is no brass on that hard forehead?

North. I see but bone—and though the brain within is of intellect "all compact," the heart that feeds it burns with passions not unheroic.

Tickler. King of them all—ambition.

North.—

"The last infirmity of noble minds!"

Tickler. No—you misunderstand—you misrepresent Milton. He spoke of the love of fame.

North. So do I. In Brougham—do him justice—the two passions are one,—and under its perpetual inspiration he has

"Scorned delights, and lived laborious days,"

till with all his sins, by friend and foe, he is held to be, in his character of Statesman, the first man in England.

Tickler. Are you fuddled?

North. Not to my knowledge; yet that champagne does effervesce in an old man's brain——

Tickler. And makes him utter confounded nonsense.

North. No—no—no—my dear friend, I am in sober sadness—and therefore I do not fear to ask you to look on—yonder picture.

Tickler. Where?

North. There!

Tickler. Ay—ay—ay—I cannot look on it—without a throb within my heart—a mist before my eyes,—Sir Walter to the very life!

North. Allan's.[1]

Tickler. Most admirable.

North. The Minstrel—the Magician—the Man.

[1] Sir William Allan's picture, entitled "The Author of Waverley in his Study."

Tickler. At times I cannot believe that he is dead.[1]

North. Nor I. He is buried! He once showed me the place where he hoped his bones would lie.

Tickler. And do they?

North. They do. The people of Scotland could not have endured to lose them—no—not if he had died in the most distant land; nor would his bones have rested in any sepulchre, though consecrated by a nation's tears, out of that dear region of the earth which his genius has glorified for ever.

Tickler. All's well.

North. How affectingly our friend Allan has strewn the silver hair along his magnificent forehead! The face is somewhat aged—and it had begun to look so a few years ago—before that, so healthful that it promised to filial eyes a long, long life. But there is a young expression of gladness in the eyes—unbedimmed as yet by any mortal trouble—the light of genius there being all one with that of gracious humanity,—two words which, I feel, contain his character.

Tickler. Surrounded with relics of the olden time!

North. Ay—as he looked on them how his imagination kindled! At the sight of that Scottish spear, Flodden was before him—or Bannockburn.

Tickler. These deer-hounds have missed their master. Come—North. The picture is most beautifully painted—no man who looks at it needs be sorrowful.

North. All Scotland is sorrowful.

Tickler. No—her hills and valleys are rejoicing in the sunshine. Scotland is not sorrowful—though she has interred her greatest son. He will live for ever in the nation's heart.

North. You remember Milton's lines on Shakespeare—

> "What needs my Shakespeare for his honour'd bones,
> The labour of an age in pilèd stones;
> Or that his hallow'd relics should be hid
> Under a star-y-pointing pyramid!
> Dear Son of Memory! Great Heir of Fame!
> What need'st thou such weak witness of thy fame!
> Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
> Hast built thyself a living monument."

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[1] "About half-past one, P.M.," says Mr Lockhart, "Sir Walter breathed his last in the presence of all his children. It was a beautiful day—so warm that

That high feeling was natural in such a soul as Milton's; but it would pass away, and the Poet of Paradise would have reverently regarded in his mind's eye a star-y-pointing Pyramid over the Swan of Avon. A national monument is a depository of many thoughts—the gathered tribute of millions raises it—yet every man sees in it his individual feelings—and therefore the work is blest. "It is an expression of gratitude—an act of reverence."

Tickler. The nation will do what is right.

North. Homer represents Greece—Virgil, Italy—Cervantes, Spain—Voltaire, France—Goethe, Germany—Shakespeare, England—and Scotland, he in whom we exult—he whom we deplore. I hope you admire the arrangements of my Martins?

Tickler. Eh?

North. The noblest of all his works is Belshazzar's Feast.

Tickler. They are all noble. I do admire the arrangement of your Martins; for so should the prodigious shadowings of Sin, Wrath, Judgment, and Doom, be all gathered together in their own region that expands and extends far, wide, and high into the pomp and grandeur——

North. Don't mouth so. Martin is the KING of the VAST.

Tickler. Nineveh—Babylon—in our ears heretofore but names—now before our eyes cities——

North. With all their temples renovated from the dust—unshorn their towery diadems——

Tickler. Or settling down in the "gloom of earthquake and eclipse."

North. This great painter is said to repeat himself—and I am glad of it; so does the rising and the setting sun.

Tickler. Have you seen his "Illustrations of the Bible?"

North. They are lying on that table. Martin has shown in them that he has the finest feeling of beauty both in nature and in human life. "The fairest of her daughters, Eve," stands before us in the only painted Paradise that ever reminded me of Eden.

Tickler. What! You have been there?

every window was wide open—and so perfectly still, that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes." He was buried in the Abbey of Dryburgh, on the 26th September 1832.

North. In sleep.

Tickler. I would rather be in the Highlands. Have you Colonel Murray's "Outlines?"

North. No. What Colonel Murray?

Tickler. Son of Sir Peter—nephew of Sir George.

North. What's their style of character?

Tickler. Why, that outline style of drawing and engraving, the adaptation of which to the faithful delineation of scenery of a bold and picturesque character, was so well exemplified a few years since by Mr Robson.

North. One of the best landscape-painters of the age.[1]

Tickler. The Colonel is an admirable artist. He has given us Loch Maree, the Scuir of Egg, Loch Alsh, with Castle Donnan, Kilchurn Castle, and Loch Awe——

North.—

"Child of loud-throated War!
Now silent!"

Tickler. Ben Venue and the Trosachs; Basaltic Scenery near Ra-na-haddon, Skye; the Red Head, Angus; Dunottar Castle, Coir-Urchran on the Tay, Killiecrankie, and Schehallion——

North. You pronounce those glorious names like a true Gael, like a Son of the Mist.

Tickler. It is published in numbers—and deserves encouragement from all Scotland. The history and literature of the country are identified with the scenes represented, not by casual or incidental allusions, but by a mode of illustration calculated to give a deeper and more lasting interest to the subjects and places. Each leaf of the descriptive letterpress being made applicable to the sketch which accompanies it—each subject is thus kept distinct—every number is complete in itself, and any person may select, at wonderfully small expense, faithful likenesses and illustrations of those places which are endeared to him by early recollections, or from the impressions they have produced on his mind in riper years. At present the work will be confined, I perceive, to all the remarkable places in Scotland *north of Edinburgh.* That division of it will be comprised in Twenty Numbers, but *two shillings* each—forming one volume, accompanied by copious

[1] George Fenney Robson published *Outlines of the Grampian Hills,* and *Landscape Illustrations of the Waverley Novels.* He died in 1833.

references, indices, and a map, and will form the Illustrated Record of the North of Scotland.

North. A MAGNUM OPUS, *quod felix faustumque sit.* The Murrays are a noble family. And yonder lie eight Numbers of a work, in a different style indeed, but illustrative of many of the same scenes—"Select Views of the Lakes of Scotland from Original Paintings, by John Fleming, engraved by Joseph Swan, with Historical and Descriptive Illustrations, by John Leighton." It is published at Glasgow, a city of late years becoming as distinguished for genius and talent in the fine arts, as it has long been for integrity and enterprise in the pursuits of commerce.

Tickler. I know it—I have it; and the two works together bring the lakes and seas of Scotland, its woods, glens, and mountains, more vividly before my eyes, than any other works of art that I now remember.

North. I have often admired Fleming's water-colour landscapes in our annual exhibition here; and Mr Swan has by his burin done them ample justice. None of our southern neighbours should visit the Highlands without being possessed of both works.

Tickler. Pray, what are the two green-board vols. perched pertly near your lug on the surbase?[1]

North. "Wild Sports of the West." They contain many picturesque descriptions of the wildest scenery in Connaught, many amusing and interesting tales and legends, much good painting of Irish character; and the author is a true sportsman.[2]

Tickler. That branch of our literature is in full leaf.

North. It flourishes. Lloyd,[3] Hawker,[4] and Mundy,[5] are

[1] *Surbase*—the moulding at the top of the wainscot, rising, in old-fashioned rooms at least, to the height of two or three feet from the floor. The recurrence of this word enables me to correct an error into which I had fallen in vol. ii. p. 136, note. In that page, instead of *subbase* we should read *surbase*—an amendment for which, irrespective of the confirmation which it receives from the text at this place, I am indebted to three ingenious correspondents.

[2] "William Henry Maxwell, once an officer in the British army, and at this time a beneficed clergyman in Ireland. His *Stories of Waterloo*, and other works of fiction, as well as his *Life of Wellington*, have been very popular."—*American Editor.*

[3] See *ante*, p. 96.

[4] Hawker's *Instructions to Young Sportsmen.*

[5] Mundy's *Pen and Pencil Sketches in India: being the Journal of a Tour in the various Upper Provinces of India in the Years* 1827-29, *with Woodcuts and 25 spirited Etchings of Indian Field-Sports by Landseer.*

accomplished gentlemen — and, as for Nimrod,[1] he is "*The* Great Historian of the Field." But I shall have an article on the vols. at my lug, probably in our next Number—so I need not——

Tickler. Toss them over to me, and I shall put them into my pocket.

North. Not so fast. I never lend books now—for, like Scotchmen who cross the Tweed, they never return home again.

Tickler. And these others?

North. Two truly delightful volumes — *Characteristics of Women, Moral, Poetical, and Historical*, with Fifty Vignette Etchings, by Mrs Jameson. Shakespeare's Women!

Tickler. It used to be said by the critics of a former age, that he could not draw female characters.

North. The critics of a former age were a pack of fools.

Tickler. So are too many of the present.

North. And will be of the future. All the ancient Dramatists drew female characters well—especially Massinger. But Shakespeare has beautified the sex——

Tickler. "Given perfume to the violets."

North. Mrs Jameson arranges all Shakespeare's women into classes:—characters of Intellect—Portia, Isabella, Beatrice, Rosalind; characters of Passion and Imagination—Juliet, Helena, Perdita, Viola, Ophelia, Miranda; characters of the Affections—Hermione, Desdemona, Imogen, Cordelia; Historical characters—Cleopatra, Octavia, Volumnia, Constance of Bretagne, Elinor of Guienne, Blanche of Castile, Margaret of Anjou, Katharine of Arragon, Lady Macbeth.

Tickler. What a galaxy! In every name a charm. In imagination a man might marry nine-tenths of them—a spiritual seraglio.

North. My critiques on Sotheby's *Homer* seem to have been pretty well liked, though dashed off hurriedly, and I suppose they were not without a certain enthusiasm. I purpose haranguing away in a similar style, for a few articles, on Mrs Jameson's Shakespeare.[2]

Tickler. Do. You are often extravagant—not seldom absurd; but still there is, I grant, a certain enthusiasm——

[1] Mr Apperley wrote under the signature of "Nimrod" in the *Sporting Magazine*, and for many years was looked up to as the highest authority on all matters connected with the field, the road, or the turf.

[2] See *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xxxiii., pp. 125, 143, 391, 539.

North. Don't come over me with the Mocking-Bird. I have frequently observed that whatever disparaging character a man carelessly sports of himself or writings, his commonplace people forthwith adopt it as gospel; and thus a modest person like myself, being taken at his own word, is estimated far below his great genius——

Tickler. Hem!

North. This most charming of all the works of a charming writer has revived in me my old love of the Acted Drama. I shall again be a Play-goer.

Tickler. Here?

North. Yes—here and in London, which I shall visit next spring—if alive; and I am engaged, indeed, to dine on the first of May with my friend Allan Cunninghame.

Tickler. I shall be of the party.

North. It is false and most unjust to living genius to say that there are now on the stage few or no great actors. There are as many as ever there were at any one era. Young has just retired; but I trust to see him once or twice again ere I make my final exit—Macready is first-rate—Kean, in some characters, greater than Garrick.

Tickler. But the actresses?

North. A few—and there never were more than a few at any one time—are admirable.

Tickler. Miss Tree I saw lately in Julia in *The Hunchback*, and she is a charming performer.

North. She is—but there are—THE THREE FANNIES.

Tickler. Eh?

North. Miss Fanny Kelly—a woman of original genius—fine taste—strong intellect—and exquisite sensibility—equal to any part of passion.

Tickler. She is.

North. Miss Fanny Kemble acts nobly, like a Poetess, as she is—and equal to either of them in all things, and in some superior to both, is—our own Miss Fanny Jarman. Equal to either in power and pathos, and superior to both in grace, elegance, and beauty. The Three are all as much respected for their virtues in private life, as they are admired for their genius on the stage. And that lends a charm to their impersonations of such characters as Imogen, Desdemona, Ophelia, and Cordelia, which is felt by every audience, and for the want of which no accomplishments can compensate.

(*Enter* Louisa, Harriet, *and* Helen, *with the Tea-Tray, &c., &c.*)

Tickler. Angels and ministers of grace!

North. One or other of you, my good girls, look in upon us, now and then, during the hour, to see if we require any of your services. God bless you. [*They curtsy and retire.*

Tickler. Eh?

North. Sisters three—and daughters of the Grieve on my little property in Tweeddale, on a visit at present to an uncle, gardener to our friend in Trinity Tower. My worthy housekeeper has a young party in her own room this evening, and these obliging creatures requested permission to be attendant nymphs on the old gentleman——

Tickler. They did not call you so?

North. Not to my face, Tim; but depend on't, middle-aged men like us are thought as old as the hills by Miss in her Teens; and as for these pretty creatures, I look on them as mere children. Such a sight as that is good for the eyesight—But pray what were we talking about?

Tickler. Confound me if I remember. These witches have——

North. You see that blue folio? 'Tis the Report from the Select Committee on Dramatic Literature, with Minutes of Evidence. I glanced over it this afternoon, along with Mr Bulwer's excellent speech on moving the appointment of the said Select Committee. Have you studied the Question?

Tickler. What Question?

North. That of the patents granted to the Two Great Theatres for the performance of the Drama.

Tickler. Not I—but let us study while we discuss it. I know no better method of mastering any subject. I forget what you were going to say?

North. How would you define or describe the "regular drama?"

Tickler. The regular drama is—is,—the regular drama is—that drama which comprehends—or say rather which excludes all dramatic perform—performances—that is compo,—stop, I must correct myself,—the regular drama may, I think, be defined to be that—no—described—as that which,—nay, let me perpend,—why, after you—if you please, Kit—for you have been ruminating on the subject. Pray, North, let me ask

you—my good fellow—before we go any farther, how would you define or describe the regular drama?

North. I see nothing that can be either added or taken away from the truly Aristotelian definition which you have now given of it; and everything dramatic not included within the terms thereof, may be philosophically pronounced to belong to the irregular drama.

Tickler. Having settled that point, which is at once nice and knotty, we may proceed to overhaul the minutes of evidence, and judge of its bearings on the general question of the patents.

North. Would that worthy Mr Winston had had the benefit of hearing your admirable definition, before he was badgered by the Select. "What do you consider is meant by the regular Drama?" asked one of the inquisitors. And the veteran Ex-Manager of the Haymarket replied—"The regular Drama I consider to be Tragedy and Comedy, *and everything on the stage.*"—"What! Burletta?"—"Yes—because TOM THUMB *was played in the regular theatres*, and is printed and called a Burletta."—"What do you consider a Burletta to be?"—"Recitative and singing; no speaking whatever; THE GOLDEN PIPPIN is a *strong specimen* of it—and OLYMPUS IN AN UPROAR."—"Is OLYMPUS IN AN UPROAR the regular Drama."—"Yes—for it is played at the regular theatres, and played under license."—"Do I understand you to include every stage representation?"—"Yes — the regular Drama *includes everything.*

Tickler. Very sensible.

North. One of the Select then asks Mr Winston what he "considers to be *not* the regular drama?" At that he shakes his head, and says, "I do not know; that it is a very difficult thing to ascertain;" but plucking up courage, he adds, "If they can play everything, *then everything is the regular drama.*"

Tickler. So in a regular drama there is no need for the performers, unless they like it, to utter a single word.

North. None in the world.

Tickler. And "Tom Thumb," "the Golden Pippin," and "Olympus in an Uproar," are all *strong* specimens of the regular drama?

North. Samsons. Mr Winston is then asked if "tumbling be the regular drama?" and his silence speaks consent. So, of course, must be dancing and swinging on the rope.

Tickler. Why go into particulars? Did he not say the regular drama included "*everything?*"

North. But he qualifies that somewhat sweeping assertion; for, on being asked, "Are lions the regular drama?" he answers promptly and firmly, "No, I should consider not; not lions, certainly."

Tickler. Well, well—though there may perhaps be some slight difference between Mr Winston's definition and mine of the regular drama, they seem to agree on the main points; so let's to the general question of the patents.

North. It is well stated by Mr Bulwer to be this—"How far is it expedient for the public, that privileges and enactments of this monopolising description should be continued?"[1]

Tickler. What privileges and enactments?

North. Why—to use the words of Mr Bulwer—by a late decision of the Lord Chancellor, it seems that all performances worthy of the attendance of persons pretending to a reasonable degree of education—all performances, except those of the most mountebank and trumpery description, fit only for the players of Bartholomew Fair, are to be considered as infringements of the law, and as subjecting those who assist in them to serious penalties.

Tickler. Pray, what, generally speaking, is the character of the Minor Theatres?

North. More or less respectable.

Tickler. Clear and explicit.

North. And can there be a doubt that their character would be elevated by lawful liberty to enact the regular drama?

Tickler. "To be or not to be—that is the question."

North. There is much difference of opinion among the witnesses as to the comparative adaptation of large and small theatres for general dramatic effect. Charles Kemble (one of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre) argues with much ability in favour of very large ones, such as Covent Garden and Drury Lane. The same plays, acted by the same performers on alternate nights, at the Haymarket and the Opera-House, paid better by £200 or £300 at the larger than at the smaller.

[1] On the 31st May, 1832, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton "moved for a select committee to inquire into the law respecting Dramatic Literature and the performance of the Drama," which motion was agreed to.

Tickler. That proves nothing.

North. Mind the smaller was not half full.

Tickler. Ho—ho—then it would seem to prove a great deal.

North. Matthews the Admirable, whose amusing and ingenious evidence, however, is far from convincing on the general merits, treated the Select with John Kemble's opinion, delivered as if by John himself; for, quoth Charles, "I never can repeat a conversation, unless I do it in the style of the person who gave it."

Tickler. O rare Charles Matthews! He becomes the original with such intensity, that the original seems to dwindle into an imperfect and ineffectual imitation of his own self. You cannot allow the original original, after you have seen and heard Charles in him, to perform himself; he looks so very tame; he wants that brilliance, which burns round and about his creative doubleganger; and the wisest thing he can do is to become, in the critic's row in the pit, an ecstatic admirer of his own perfections.

North. "It is a common complaint," quoth Charles as John, "to speak about the size of the Theatres; the Public will tell you that they like small Theatres; *sir, they lie;* they like large theatres. They go to the opera, because it is a large theatre; and when my sister and myself, and Mr Cook, acted in Henry the Eighth, when we acted at the King's Theatre, we played to £600; and when we went over to the Theatre opposite, we never got £200 to the same play."

Tickler. "Sir, they lie!" Christopher North in Charles Matthews in John Kemble in Samuel Johnson.

North. One of the Select says, that he can perfectly well understand that there are certain sorts of representations which can only be represented in large theatres, such as pantomimes, melodramas, and spectacles, and things of that sort; but Charles Kemble rather sharply replies—"Excuse me; I think, with respect to melodramas and pantomimes, it is a mistake to suppose they can be better acted at large than at small theatres. Indeed, I think a pantomime may be better acted in a small theatre than in a large one; because those changes which are necessary for the great success of a pantomime, are much more easily effected in a small theatre than in a large one. With respect to melodramas, they do not depend for success entirely on splendour. On the contrary, I should say,

the most successful melodramas have been those which depended on strong excitement in the story or incidents of the piece; for without these, all the splendour in the world will do nothing either in a large or in a small theatre. Splendour alone does nothing, or next to nothing, to the success of a piece."

Tickler. Well said Charles Kemble. One of the most delightful sights in this world, North, is a fine melodrama. Wiseacres, prigs, sumphs, and your general blockheads, abuse such beautiful spectacles; yet even they are not insensible to their fascination, as may be seen in the glaring stare of their great goggle eyes devouring the stage. That the Public loves the melodrama, is a proof that she is not so prosaic a Public as she seems to be when in the act of reading through the advertisements in a morning newspaper.

North. Worthy soul! she has some poetry in her after all—some imagination—some perception of moving grace or skill—an eye and a heart—a soul—for the fairy world of enchanted cloudland and its floating inhabitants. I too, Tim, do dearly love the melodrama.

Tickler. What farther sayeth the deponent?

North. That there are certain plays which require enlarged space—for example, "Coriolanus," and "Julius Cæsar," and "Macbeth."

Tickler. All tragedies that involve magnificence in the grouping of the characters, in the incidence of the events, in the scenic shows.

North. Just so; whereas dramas of a humbler, of a domestic, of a more familiar kind, such as "The Hunchback"——

Tickler. A beautiful play.

North. Very—may be as effectively performed, or perhaps more so, in a theatre of very moderate size.

Tickler. Plain as a pikestaff.

North. Mr Macready's opinion coincides with Mr Kemble's. He tells us that he finds it much easier to act in a small theatre than in a large one,—and that for merely domestic scenes and simple dialogue, when there is nothing of pomp and circumstance attending it, he should prefer a small theatre; but as for Shakespeare's plays, that very few of them can be found which can have due effect given them in a small theatre. Even the Haymarket he thinks hardly large enough

to allow a fair acting of Shakespeare's Plays. In scenes where only two persons have been on the stage—and one of these Kean—he thought nothing about the size of the house; but when a great number occupied the stage, he felt the want of space and too great proximity of the performers.

Tickler. What say Young and Kean?

North. Mr Young does not appear at all.

Tickler. Extraordinary! The finest actor on the stage—*Ultimus Romanorum.* So must all have felt who ever saw him in Brutus.

North. Mr Kean prefers a large stage—Drury Lane. He thinks the intellect becomes confined by the size of the theatre—that in a larger one the illusion is better preserved—that the illusion is heightened by the somewhat diminished appearance of the performers—and that any actor, with a good enunciation, may be heard as well at Drury Lane as any theatre in the world—even in the one-shilling gallery—if the gods will but be silent——

Tickler. And not keep perpetually performing "Olympus in an Uproar."

North. That an eye of average power can perfectly well distinguish the play of the countenance at that distance—and that there is this other very material consideration, that the faults of the actor are less observable——

Tickler. Pray, how is that? Beauties all distinct, defects all hidden—how is that, pray?

North. Ask Mr Kean. You know Dowton?

Tickler. Well—a first-rater of the Old School. How deponeth Dowton?

North. "I am astonished," quoth Mister William, "at Mr Kean's opinion; because, when I am told that actors can be as well seen in Drury Lane Theatre as in a smaller one, I can as well believe you can hang a cabinet picture on the top of that tower, and say, 'Do you observe those beautiful touches—do you observe its lights and shadows? No—I cannot see it at all.' That is my opinion as to the stage. Give me a theatre of moderate size, *where you can be natural.*"

Tickler. That "must give us pause."

North. Mr Dowton is then asked whether Mr Kean's acting is the more effective at Drury Lane or Covent Garden, or in a small theatre in the country? And he says, "much more to

my satisfaction in a small theatre in the country." He thinks that even a play like "Julius Cæsar" could be much better performed in a theatre of the size of the Haymarket, than in one of far greater dimensions—not only as regards the merit of one actor, but the whole body of performers, if they have any pretensions to acting at all. It was said by John Kemble, that about two-thirds of the audience at Covent Garden could see and hear well, and Mr Dowton is much of his opinion with regard to that: hear they may, for the actor knows he must be heard, and will bawl.

Tickler. And if he bawl, that third who could not otherwise have heard him, must be wonderfully delighted with his bawl, softened ere it reach their ears into a sound not a little extraordinary, but still a bawl; for, believe me, a bawl will be a bawl to doomsday, to whatever distance it may be projected by the action of mortal lungs, and of the organs of inhuman speech.

North. Then the two-thirds who would have heard the unfortunate man, or still more wretched woman, had he or she spoken naturally, must be placed immediately under the unabated bawl, and thence an inevitable universal headache.

Tickler. Yet, North, I love a large theatre. My friend Beazely, an architect of the first eminence, asserts that a very large theatre may be so scientifically constructed, that articulate sounds shall most audibly circle its entire extent; and how far off was heard the whisper of the Siddons!

North. Could we imagine one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies performed, in all its great parts, by consummate actors, in an immense overflowing house, so finely constructed that every auditor felt possessed of the ear of Dionysius, then, Tickler, would the manager "give the world assurance of a *play*."

Tickler. But performers, with feeblish faces that must frown, punyish figures that must strut, and squeakyish voices that must crack, before they can be at all tragical, on a large stage, may act very naturally and effectively in one of a corresponding size, and prove their popularity by bumper benefits.

North. The truth is, that genius will achieve its highest triumphs alike, on stages of all sizes, from that of Covent Garden, down even to the mud floor of a barn.

Tickler. Illusion! Did not Garrick, in his everyday clothes, in a small parlour, with such terrible transformation assume

the sudden insanity of a mother, out of whose arms her child had fallen from a window, and been dashed to pieces before her eyes, that women fainted in horror at his feet, on "acting of that dreadful thing?"

North. Good. And had he come on a stage, wide as a wilderness, hearts far remote in the galleries as in the clouds, would have beat

"At every flash of his far-beaming eye."

Tickler. Good.

North. Mr Matthews and I are at one when he says, that the magnificence of the style of John Kemble and his sister were seen to as great effect in a large theatre as in a small one; but there are a great number of persons[1] whose countenance alone carries them to small theatres, for they cannot be seen to the same advantage in a large one. But Charles adds wisely, "I never heard that objection stated, during a fashion to run after everything attractive; I never heard any people say, they could not see Miss O'Neil; she was a beautiful actress, and everybody admired her"——

Tickler. All the world and his wife.

North. My esteemed friend then observes, that he finds "all the people *who go in with orders*, say the theatres are far too large, but those *who pay for their admission* are good-tempered."

Tickler. Our provincial theatres, compared with the great London ones, are all small—yet——

North. Except that in Glasgow. It is of the same class as Covent Garden, but of a peculiar construction. It may be divided into three parts; in one you cannot hear, in another you cannot see, and in the third you can neither see nor hear. I remember once sitting alone in the third division—and never before or since have I had such a profound feeling of the power of solitude.

Tickler. I say, our provincial theatres are all of moderate size; yet when stars appear, are they not worshipped? All our great performers have trod the Edinburgh stage; and there has been "hush as deep as death," followed by peals of thunder.

North. And where else than on provincial boards have great performers been bred?

[1] *i.e.* Actors.

Tickler. Has this discussion any drift?

North. Oh, yes. Without joining the cry against the size of the Great London Theatres, I for one am clear for putting an end to their monopoly of the regular drama. In theatres of a smaller size, it may be, and has been, acted as effectively as in them; and experience alone can decide whether with Freedom of Trade it will flourish or decay.

Tickler. It has not flourished under Patents—without them it may.

North. Sir Charles Wetherell would not listen with patience to any proposed change in the Close System, nor agree to Mr Bulwer's motion, unless he could prove to him that the multiplication of theatres will "give us another Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, and restore the golden age of Dramatic Literature."

Tickler. That was rather a little unreasonable in our most excellent friend.

North. Rather. Another Ben Jonson may be imagined—though one is quite enough; but Mr Bulwer expressed no hope of being able, by any efforts of his in Parliament, to produce another Shakespeare.

Tickler. Nor yet, so far as I have heard, to restore the Golden Age——

North. Not he. But seeing the regular drama in a languishing condition at the Great Houses, and, as Sir Charles himself says, "Lions and Tigers, and Cameleopards, and, in fact, the whole of Noah's Ark trotted up and down the stage," he thinks, that were there several moderate-sized theatres judiciously set down in the Mighty Metropolis, such would be the resort to them of respectable and well-educated people, that they would always be able to engage, and would probably sometimes produce, excellent actors; and that thus a permanent love of the regular drama (along with an occasional passion for the irregular) would be created, and more encouragement given than at present to men of genius to write for the stage.

Tickler. I should have voted for Mr Bulwer's motion.

North. Charles Kemble has no doubt, that along with the patents would go the very life of the Two Great Theatres.

Tickler. I should be sorry for that—but they could be van-

quished only by better houses—and the public would in that case gain by the death.

North. His arguments are ably put, but to me they appear inconclusive. He says "that the new theatres would bribe away certain individuals of acknowledged talent and celebrity," (and he adds, parenthetically and pathetically, "God knows they are too few!") "but those few would be scattered then in half-a-dozen different theatres, instead of being collected in one or two; and the perfection of a play depends extremely on the talent you get into it."

Tickler. No doubt it does.

North. The conclusion he draws from these premises is, that the Great Theatres would be ruined, and at the same time the smaller ones good for nothing.

Tickler. Whew!

North. If one first-rate actor could not support a small theatre, and if, as Mr Kemble thinks, only one at the most could be got, then, in a very short time indeed, the small theatres would be changed into conventicles—and Covent Garden and Drury Lane, after transient obscuration, effulge, like suns, brighter from eclipse. He says that a long time would elapse before the legitimate drama could be adequately represented in one of those theatres; and I say, that if so, the public could not wait a long time, and the actors of genius and celebrity, that had been bribed away, would return to their former spheres.

Tickler. I have the highest esteem for Charles Kemble, but I fear you are right.

North. Neither will he admit that the competition of the new theatres would bring forward new actors of talent or genius. "If," says he, "you divide the little talent there is among us into a *great number* of theatres, you will be worse served."

Tickler. Whew!

North. There would not be a great number of theatres; nor does anybody suppose that, by dividing a given quantity of talent, and that quantity little, you will make it great. It is to talent not yet displayed, not yet born, that the stimulus of competition will be applied——

Tickler. Don't dwell longer on that point, or you will get prosier than you may suspect. Keep moving.

North. "It is not the increase of theatres," cries Charles, with great animation, "that will give you an increase of fine actors. The qualifications of a fine actor are a gift that God gives, and they are not to be multiplied as theatres may be."

Tickler. That is very spunky—but whence arise fine actors but from theatres? John Kemble—Sarah Siddons——

North. Don't get prosy, Tim. Mr Kemble then says that many of the smaller London theatres have acted the legitimate drama in *defiance of all law*, but that we do not see those results which the advocates for minor theatres seem to calculate on—we have not seen that great actors have arisen in them.

Tickler. A manifest sophism. Those theatres have indeed occasionally acted the legitimate drama (some of them never have), but *in defiance of law;* and is it to be expected that, under such uncertainty and peril, and even discredit, great or good actors are to arise?

North. Mr Kemble even goes the length of denying that there is any demand for any other theatres. If the public call for them, there is good reason, he allows, for answering the public; but the present demands are got up, he asserts, by a set of interested adventurers and speculators, who have nothing to lose, and think the best course they can pursue is to ruin those whom they think have. Some have already become bankrupt.

Tickler. In that case, then, he has little to fear. But great theatres, alas! become bankrupt too—

"The paths of glory lead to the Gazette."

North. Mr Charles Kemble, however, though arguing throughout under a strong bias, is a man of honour; and on this question being forcibly pressed upon him, "Do you not think that the cultivation of a taste for the Drama, which would be favoured by the increased number of theatres having the power to exercise the legitimate Drama, would more than make up for any loss you might sustain by competition?" He answers, with laudable candour, "If I speak conscientiously, which I wish to do, I should think they might prove a nursery; that it is probable that in a length of years, if the number of theatres were restricted to a reasonable number, and those theatres were only allowed to act the legitimate Drama, and that there might be none of those spurious entertainments

given"—(no, no, my dear Charles, that would be a most unfair restriction, while spurious entertainments were allowed in the Great Theatres),—" then I agree that the Drama might be improved, and in course of years we might expect to have *elèves*, who would fully replace the good actors we have now."

Tickler. What says Matthews?

North. To my utter astonishment and dismay, that permission to perform the legitimate drama at other theatres besides the two patent ones and the Haymarket, " would, in the course of a very short time, *brutalise the drama.*"

Tickler. I am dumfoundered. How feel you at that discharge?

North. As if a bullet had gone through my head.

Tickler. In at one ear and out at the other, without touching the brain.

North. Nevertheless, I would fain try a fall with this Charles; but I feel fatigued with my tussle with the other strong man, so must retire from the ring; though it forces me to eat my heart to see the castor of such a customer flung up without my pitching in after it my vernon.

Tickler. I take.

North. The Drama, I fear, is in a bad way, Tim, in London; and if so, it cannot be very flourishing in the provinces. Mr Matthews acknowledges that fashion is fatal to it. "I meet young gentlemen now," says he, " who formerly used to think it almost a crime not to go to the theatre; but they now ask, 'whereabouts is Covent Garden Theatre?' although the same people would faint away if they thought they had not been to the Italian Opera. If they are asked whether they have seen Kean or not lately, they will say, 'Kean? Kean? No. Where does he act? I have not been there these three years.' Formerly, it was the fashion to go to the theatre; but now a lady cannot show her face at table next day, and say she has been at the theatre. If they are asked whether they have been at Covent Garden or Drury Lane, they say, 'Oh, dear, no! I never go there—it is too low!'"

Tickler. Taglioni, I am told, is a seducing Sylph—Heberlé a dangerous Dryad. They dance you into a delirium.

North. And the German opera is divine.

Tickler. Those morning, forenoon, afternoon, evening, and midnight concerts, private and public, are sadly against play-

going. To say nothing of *déjeunés* prolonged from meridian to twilight, and dinners of countless courses——

North. Gaming-tables in drawing-rooms, parlours, boudoirs, *bed-rooms*.

Tickler. O Lord! not in bed-rooms——

North. Yes, even so. There is nothing too good or too bad, too beautiful or too ugly——

Tickler. Ugsome.

North. That Fashion and Folly will not fix on with a mad desire, till all at once the passion sickens and dies, and "off to some other game they both together fly!"

Tickler. Matthews is right here—if wrong there.

North. "I remember the time," saith the green and glorious veteran (he has been nearly forty years on the stage), "when it was no shame to go to see the legitimate drama; but it is now." But, asks one of the Select, "do you not think that may be the result of the acting not being sufficiently good?" "I want to know when the actors *have not been sufficiently good* FOR THEM?"

Tickler. Spoken like a man.

North. "It was the fashion," he adds, "to go and see Miss O'Neil *for a season;* and Mr Kean *for a season;* if they were real and sincere admirers of those actors, they would have followed them; but we found that theatres, at which they acted, dropt down from £600 to £200."

Tickler. There are lamentably few sincere admirers of anything admirable in this world.

North. You know old George Colman?

Tickler. No.

North. You have read his *Broad Grins?*

Tickler. No. Eye and nose shrunk from the dunghill in disgust.

North. He holds under the Lord Chamberlain the Office of Examiner of all theatrical entertainments.

Tickler. That is sufficient of itself to damn the drama.

North. He was sworn, he gravely tells us, in February 1824, "to take care that nothing should be introduced into plays which is profane or indecent, or morally or politically improper for the stage."

Tickler. I see no use, in his case, of such an oath. I presume were he to suffer anything of the sort to defile a play—

profanity or indecency I mean — he would be dismissed, and lose his salary; and that fear, being of this world, would be likely to be as operative on the hoary-headed perpetrator of the filth of *Broad Grins*, as the reverence of any oath regarding merely the life to come. 'Twas a needless profanation of the Prayer-book or Bible.

North. The dotard has become intolerantly decent in his old age; so pious, that he shudders at the word "angel" in a play! "The Committee have heard of your cutting out of a play the epithet 'angel' as applied to a woman?"

Tickler. Nay—that must be calumny on Colman.

North. No. George, as Mawworm, cantingly, and yet, I doubt not, leeringly replies, "Yes, because it is *a woman*, I grant, but it is a *celestial woman*. It is an allusion to the scriptural angels, which are celestial bodies. Every man who has read his Bible understands what they are; or if he has not, I will refer him to Milton."

Tickler. Well, I did not know till now that there is a man in England who denies that a human woman—a female woman, as the sailors say—is an angel. Is the old sinner——

North. We are all old sinners.

Tickler. True. Is the old sinner serious when he insinuates that a human female is not a celestial creature?

North. He seems so—stupidly and doggedly serious.

Tickler. Does the aged docken deny that she is a "celestial body?"

North. He does.

Tickler. Fie on the old Eunuch!

North. He utters a falsehood when he says that every man who has read his Bible understands what the scriptural angels are: no man understands what they are; they are a mystery. But note the impudence of the hypocrite. "*If he has not*, I will refer him to Milton." That is, "if he has not read his Bible;" and this language is used sarcastically to the Member of the Select Committee who was courteously interrogating the Broad-Grinner.

Tickler. I trust not courteously.

North. His impudence is only less than his ignorance, in referring his questioner to Milton, in proof of the scriptural angels being celestial women. That gentleman mildly remarks, "Milton's angels are not Ladies." Instead of blushing,

he brazens it out, and replies, "No — but *some* scriptural angels are Ladies—*I believe*"—showing that he is as ignorant of his Bible as of Milton. Then how his profanity breaks out pettishly in the word "*Ladies!*" That word was quite right in the mouth of his questioner, for he was a gentleman and a Christian, and in his mind the ideas of angels and ladies have always been united as the beings themselves are in nature. But with his awful and reverential feelings with regard to all "scriptural angels," it was shocking in the author of *Broad Grins* to call them in the same breath "*Ladies*" —in his mouth an equivocal term—even when provoked to do so by the exposure of his shameful ignorance of the Book on which he had sworn. Ladies! He must have been thinking of the Saloons.

Tickler. You are too severe, Kit.

North. Not a whit. He also says insolently, and, with his religious belief, impiously, "I do not recollect that *I struck out an angel or two*, but most probably I have at some time or other." This affectation of a profound religious spirit in such a man, and on such an occasion, is at first ludicrous, and then loathsome—and I have thought it worthy of castigation, my good Timothy, for it is a nauseous habit of hypocrisy nowadays to pretend to discern evil in the use of the most harmless and amiable expressions which a fine spirit of humanity may not only have justified, but consecrated; and of them all, not one is there more delightful in the dreams it awakens of brightness, beauty, goodness, innocence, and bliss, than "angel," when applied, as it is, by the whole Christian male population of the earth, to all the unpolluted daughters of Eve.

Tickler. Why, Kit, you have given me an absolute sermon— but your doctrine, though sweet, is, I fear, scarcely sound. You are not orthodox.

North. I am orthodox. But let me give grinning Geordie another punch. He says, "An angel is, I grant, a woman, but it is a celestial woman." Now, here again he shows that he has not read his Bible. "*Some* scriptural angels," he also admits, "are ladies." They are not only women, but ladies. Now, he mistakes the matter most entirely; they may be said, in the Bible, to be females, but certainly not *women*. In short, women are angels, but angels are not

women. A woman, though human, being universally admitted all over the world, with the single exception of George Colman, to be an angel, is, *in rerum naturâ*, by participation, celestial too; but an angel, though celestial, being universally admitted all over the world, with the exception of George Colman, to be no woman, is not, *in rerum naturâ*, by participation human; so that woman has the superiority over angel—only the one dwells on earth, and the other in heaven.

Tickler. What must George the Grinner think of the famous debate among the doctors of the dark ages on the theological question, "How many angels could dance on the point of a needle?"

North. He would faint like a young lady suspected of having been at Covent Garden Theatre.

Tickler. In what play is it said, or is it said in any play, that a person "played the fiddle like an angel?"

North. I forget—but it is very wicked. "Supposing," asks the committee-man, "you were to leave the word 'angel' in a play or farce, will you state your opinion as to the *effect it would have on the public mind?*" Colman—"It is impossible for me to say what effect it would have! I am not able to enter into the breasts of everybody who might be in gallery, pit, or boxes."

Tickler. Poor devil!

North. Mr Moncrieff, in his examination, says, "Mr Colman has been rather particular—very capricious—he would not let one mention the word 'thighs' in the *Bashful Man*—he said *those were indecent.*"

Tickler.—

"Drawn from the thighs of mighty cherubim."

Milton. Are "those indecent?"

North.—

"His cuisses on his thighs."

Shakespeare. Are "those indecent?"

Tickler. Are hips indecent?

North. No—nor haws.[1]

Tickler. The man's mind, we shall hope, is rather diseased than depraved.

North. The Queens of Spain, you know, have no legs. 'Tis

[1] *Hips* and *haws*—the berries on rose and thorn bushes.

high treason to say they have. And were a poet in that kingdom to praise the ankles of his young female sovereign, he would be broken on the wheel.

Tickler. I wonder what old Colman thinks of Madame Vestris's legs?

North. He would not license them——

Tickler. But grin like a satyr.

North. He is horrified at the word *damme*—and it is at the least a silly sound—but then he is asked, "How do you reconcile that opinion with your making use of *damme*, or any of those small oaths which you say are immoral and improper, to say nothing of the vulgarity, in some of your own compositions?" His answer to that question is a cool curiosity of its kind—"If I had been the examiner, I should have scratched them out, and would do so now; but I was in a *different position then*—I was a careless, *immoral author*—I am now the examiner of plays. *I did my business as an author at that time*, and I do my business as an examiner now!"

Tickler. Ha! ha! ha!

North. But George gives us the reason of his dislike of *damme*. "Sir Simon Rochdale in *John Bull* says, '*Damme*, if it isn't the Brazier!' Now, *putting a gentleman in that position* is wrong: in the first instance morally so; if he *happened to make a mistake, and it was not the Brazier*, HE WOULD BE DAMNED!! Now, if he said, '*hang me*, if it isn't the Brazier —would not that do *as well?*'"

Tickler. Good.

North. It seems to me very unmerciful religion to hold that Sir Simon Rochdale "would be damned" if it was not the Brazier.

Tickler. Why, if it was a deadly sin to say *damme*, Sir Simon would be damned, I humbly presume, according to Mr George's creed, whether it was the Brazier or not.

North. And if he said "*hang me*," then on the same principle he would be hanged, whether the Baronet was a brazier or a butcher, or even a retired tallow-chandler visiting his old establishment on melting-days.

Tickler. Hanged—not the position of a gentleman.

North. It seems in Colman's comedy, *John Bull*, there is what his examiner in the Select is pleased to call "a very good joke about Eve." One of the characters is said to have

no more idea of something, "than Eve had of pin-money." This "very good joke" Colman now thinks improper, and would fain it were omitted in representation. It sounds to my ears silly in the extreme—and shows what was the strength of this person's wit in the prime of manhood; but "the audience are always struck with it!"

Tickler. And the pretty mantua-maker in the middle of the pit hangs down her head, and with lily hand hides the burning blushes that kindle beneath the knowing gaze of the gallant man-milliner by her betrothed side.

North. It appears that this once most base and licentious (writer), but now most stanch and strait-laced licenser, had given in a paper to the Committee, stating that a piece had been brought forward in Paris, in which incest, adultery, murder, parricide, &c., formed the groundwork; and he is asked if he considers that he could be justified in refusing to license a piece in which those crimes were introduced. He answers —"No, *not precisely that;* let me see how the plot thickens. I should not refuse to license the murders of Richard III., *and so on;* but when it comes to such things as human nature and morality shudder at and revolt against." They do not, it seems, shudder at and revolt against incest, murder, and parricide.

Tickler. He is muddle-headed.

North. Yet his brains are not mere mire; for, when asked if human nature and morality do not shudder at *Macbeth*, he says, "Yes; but it is matter of history."

Tickler. And what does that signify? The tragedy would have been equally great had it not been matter of history.

North. The reason he gives is childish; but he adds rightly, that he would withhold the license from those plays which seem to have justified such acts.

Tickler. Are there any such?

North. None that I ever heard of. Odd notions are always floating about, but I do not remember ever having heard, either in prose or verse, any elaborate eulogy on parricide.

Tickler. He seems to show more indulgence to foul and questionable deeds than a few venial words—such as "angel," "thighs," "damme," and the like; but what could the Committee mean by asking the opinion of such a person on so

profound a question, as whether the crimes now mentioned are or are not fit subjects for the Tragic Muse?

North. They should have examined the author of the celebrated "Essay on Murder, considered as one of the Fine Arts."[1] Charles Kemble himself is here very absurd. Speaking of the general noisiness of our theatres, he says, "When you see *Macbeth*, John Bull is perfectly quiet, as he always is, when the representation of murder is going on." Very natural. But immediately afterwards Charles says to another question, "*I am afraid* the representation of a murder is very attractive." Why afraid?

Tickler. He may think, since John Bull enjoys the representation so intensely, he may have no great objection to the reality—to lending a helping hand in a *bona fide* flesh and blood murder.

North. I can't say; but he continues, "*I am sorry it is so*—it was tried in the case of Thurtell,[2] and was very attractive; but they added to the attraction by introducing the gig that had carried the murderer down to the scene; a *most atrocious thing.*" There is great confusion of ideas in that statement of good Mr Charles. The murder by Macbeth of the gracious Duncan, was, in a moral and religious point of view, far worse than the murder by Thurtell of the black-leg Weare. But, nathless, it was a grand subject for the most dreadful of all dramas. The murder, and the remorse, and the expiation, are all sublime. The murder by Thurtell of Weare, again, though not so wicked, was a mean subject for a drama, but not without the strong interest that belongs to the vulgar horrible; and, therefore, any theatrical representation of it could not fail to administer a strong purge of coarse pity and terror to vulgar minds. The persons who flocked to see it had, for the most part, minds of that nature; but in almost all, say at once in all minds, there is something of this vulgar disposition to get drunk on the worst of common British gin. Now, I ask, was it one whit more disgraceful for a Cockney public to gloat over, on the stage of an illegitimate theatre, "the acting of a dreadful thing," like that murder of a raff by a ruffian, than to

[1] For this exquisite *melange* of wit, humour, and irony, see *Miscellanies* by Thomas De Quincey. His "Essay on Murder" appeared originally in *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xxi. and vol. xlvi.

[2] See vol. i. p. 81.

do so in the columns of a newspaper? The newspapers for weeks were filled with nothing else but all the details of the throat-cutting and corpse-bundling, and pond-dragging and grave-digging, by the song-singing pork-chop-gormandising assassins of both sexes, who "assisted at the deep damnation of that taking off." The proprietors of the daily press lived on it. The finding of the body was meat and drink to them; and they fared sumptuously on the scattered brains. They got up in Printing-House Square the famous Herefordshire Tragedy before it was enacted across the water—and yet the rich proprietors of the newspapers howled at the enormity of the poor Manager, and the penny-a-liners over that of the farthing-a-speechifiers turned up the whites of their eyes and tipt.

Tickler. It was by no means a bad subject for the drama.

North. Why, it was not. Such a man as Lillo[1] would have made rather a fearful thing of it—would have brought it fairly within the range of the lower regular and legitimate drama. He has done so with other murders as bad and more hideous. I daresay the affair over the water was a most miserable one; but Mr Kemble speaks nonsense when he says, that the introduction of the very gig that carried the murderer down, *was a most atrocious thing.* There can be nothing atrocious in a green gig and an iron-grey horse. It was a "bit of good truth," that struck the imagination through the most powerful of all the senses; and, though there might not be great genius shown in the introduction of such machinery, it showed perfect knowledge of the portion of humanity that constituted that audience of spectators—and the effect, I have been told, was prodigious among the apprentices. Charles seems to have forgotten the crime of the exhibition—to wit, that it was got up before the trial of the murderer, and assumed his guilt. Had he been hanged or condemned, the green gig and iron-grey horse—a fast trotter—might have stood on the boards of the painted Gills-Hill Lane a most blameless set-out; and all that had then needed to be said would have been, that vulgar folks like to sup full of vulgar horrors—and that there are at all times, in London, multitudes of men, women, and children, who have a strong "pawpensity for the bastard dwama."

Tickler. Hush! I hear girls giggling!

[1] George Lillo, a dramatic writer, the author of *George Barnwell, Fatal Curiosity,* and *Arden of Faversham*—born in 1693, died in 1739.

(*Enter* Louisa, Harriet, *and* Helen, *each with a silver salver glittering with tiny crystals of various-hued liqueurs.* North *and* Tickler *take each a small celestial caulker in either hand, and drink to the maidens, who curtsy and retire with the salvers, tea-trays, &c.*)

North. Silent Syrens!

Tickler. Delightful damsels!

North. I wish they had been but two.

Tickler. Ay, Kit. It would have been impious to have let the third go away with untasted lips; yet worse than impious, indelicate, for both of us to have kissed the same mouth—so, "like considerate gentlemen of the good olden time," we suffered all three to go as they came. Hush! I hear them giggling! I hope they won't tell. If they do, they shan't go unpunished next time. We shall have our revenge at supper.

North. "Och hone aree!"

Tickler. "Savourna deligh! Shighan, oh!"

END OF VOL. III.

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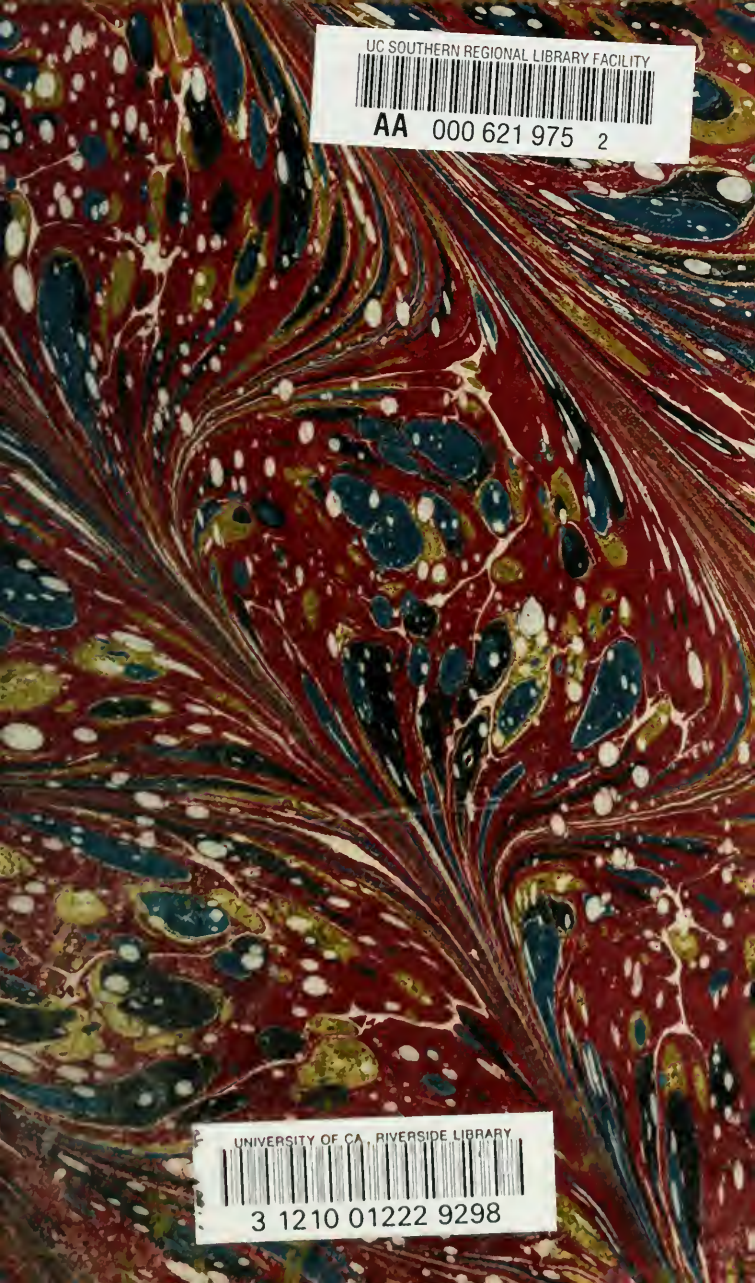

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